# THREE BROWN BOYS AND OTHER HAPPY CHILDREN

THE THREE BROWN BOYS.

Frontispiece.

# THREE BROWN BOYS

AND

# OTHER HAPPY CHILDREN.

By ELLEN HAILE.

CASSELL, PETTER & GALPIN,
NEW YORK, LONDON AND PARIS.

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1879,
By O. M. Dunham.

NEW YORK: J. J. LITTLE & CO., PRINTERS,
10 TO 20 ASTOR PLACE.

## To the Children

IN THIRTY THOUSAND FAMILIES, WHO HAVE READ THESE STORIES IN

"The Churchman,"

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED BY THEIR FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR

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# THE BROWN BOYS.

EARLY one frosty morning last Winter I was going into the city. For a long distance I had been the only person in the car, and was beginning to wonder—because I hadn't lived very long in Cambridge—if no one else ever rode in the horse-cars, when I heard the driver call out "whoa" to his horses, and then saw him turn around and smile a little nod at the conductor, who was jumping up and down on the platform to keep his feet warm. Then over *his* grim face there came a look as if something pleasant was coming, and his mouth widened into a smile so broad that, when he saw me looking at him, he pushed open the door a little way and said in an explanatory voice,

"We wont be a waitin' long, ma'am; it's them brown boys, and they're right here."

And before I had time to wonder who *they* were, three small bodies in brown ulsters and brown hats, with brown eyes very wide open, bounced into the car, quite out of breath with running.

Such a chirruping and a chattering as came in with them! I looked around to see if half a dozen sparrows had not found their way into the car by mistake; but no indeed! It was only the brown boys themselves, who were wiggling up to the seat, and settling their school books and umbrella. Each one of the three had a red mittened hand very tightly shut up, which he seemed anxious about and looked at very often, till the conductor came in, when they all flew open to let out the five-cent pieces stowed away there.

The broad smile was still on the conductor's face, and the driver had looked around two or three times, till the little boys, catching his eye, nodded and laughed and called out "Good-morning!"

"You were 'most too late this mornin'," the conductor said as he rang three little bells with his ticket puncher. "Little more 'n I'd had to have left you to come down in the car behind us. It was lucky I see you when you cut round the corner."

"Yes," they all said together, "we were almost late." "And the way it was," the boy in the brown fur cap went

on, "Ammy dropped his five cents down in the area, when we came down the steps, and the cook and Thomas had to come out and look for it; but we're here now."

"Ah, yes, you're here now," the conductor laughed as he went outside again, "so look sharp when I ring the bell and call Boylston street, and Tim 'll help you over the crossin'."

The three brown boys had their side of the car all to themselves then, and chattered away harder than ever about all sorts of things; tops and hard spelling lessons, snow-balling, and a sick kitten they called "Frisky," till the conductor opened the door, and calling "Boylston street," handed them over to the care of a fat policeman, who steered them safely across the crowded street, when they ran around a corner as fast as their short legs would carry them, and in a moment the three brown boys were out of sight.

But that wasn't the last of them; oh, no, indeed! I never saw how or when they got home again; but after that I always went into the city every morning, and always taking the car that passed the house at ten minutes past eight I soon began to watch, just as the conductor and driver did, for the brown boys. And there they always were, either hopping up or down on the curbstone, or racing down the cross street, or huddled under their one umbrella, as cheerful and happy as the brown robins they looked like.

We got acquainted in such a funny way! I dropped a book one morning, and all three of the boys jumped down to pick it up just as I was bending down to do so. Of course we all knocked our heads together over it, and so many hands were after it that nobody quite picked the book up. Such a laugh as we all had then! And after that we were great friends. Sammy and Ammy were twins, I found out. Sammy always wore a fur cap, and Ammy one with a very broad brim; while Dick, their cousin, carried the umbrella, because he had no twin brother to keep him company.

One morning, early in the Spring, when the three boys clambered into the horse-car and sat down beside me, as they always did nowadays, I said to Ammy, "Did you hear a robin sing this morning? I did, and, yes—there is one sitting on the very topmost branch of the elm-tree now."

"Yes, ma'am, I see him," the little boy answered soberly; "but don't you think robins are very foolish birds?"

"Why?" I said, very much surprised.

"Oh, because they come so early in the Spring, they catch cold, and cats catch them. Sometimes it snows, too, and if somebody didn't put crumbs out for them they would starve to death; but, then, perhaps *you* don't have the robins on your mind as we do."

"We've got a society, you see," Dick took up the story and went on, "to take care of the robins. Ammy's the president, I'm the vice-president, and Sammy's the secretary. We hold our meetings in the dining-room at Sammy's and Ammy's when it's too cold to stay in the barn, and we always resolve that it's very cruel to throw stones at robins, and that they are deserving of our united thanks for coming to tell us that Spring is here, just as papa says gentlemen do about other things down in the city; and we always resolve to feed all the robins we can, and keep all the boys from stealing their nests that we can, too; and once, only just last Spring, a boy gave Sammy a black eye just because he didn't want him to steal a robin's nest."

"In the Summer," Ammy chimed in again, "we look after *all* the birds, and mamma says they eat more bread than we do; but she doesn't care."

"But what can you do when the birds are all gone in the Fall?" I said. "Does your society take a vacation then?"

"There's always sparrows," all three boys answered; "besides, we've got a cats' hospital. Would you like to come and see it?"

The conductor called out the boys' street just then, and the three hurried off, but not before we had made an appointment for the next Saturday morning.

After he had watched them out of sight the conductor turned to me and said:

"If it is not makin' too free, ma'am, I'd like to tell you how it was that me and Jim there," nodding his head toward the driver, "first come across them little chaps. It was one mornin' last Winter, an' Jim and me was comin' down, it might have been just below where the boys get in now, or thereabouts, and right ahead of us we see a crowd of boys, three little ones all holdin' together, solid like, and five or six, a good deal bigger, a knockin' of them around, and a pushin' of them against the fence; but the three held on to somethin', Jim an' me couldn't see what, till just as we got up to them there was some good deal harder pushin' and knockin', and the three were separated. One of the little chaps, him that always wears the fur cap, he had somethin' all covered up with his little great-coat, and he ups and runs right out into the middle of the street, and all the rest after him; then he stubbed all his little toes on our track rail, and down he falls with three or four more on top of him, while the other two little fellows they runs out into the road to try to pull him up, and there was our car right on to them! Jim he shouted to 'em, and put on the break. And I jumps and runs up to them. When I got the big boys pulled off, there was the little chap, a good deal squeezed

but never cryin' a mite, just winking hard an' a holdin' on to somethin' under his coat. 'What you got there?' says I. 'A kitten,' says he, 'and the boys were stoning it, and we took it away.' Then he opened his coat, and there, safe, was the pitifulest-looking kitten I ever see. Starved, ma'am, and wild, ma'am. She'd been in the water, too, and she hadn't spirit enough left to mew. 'What'll you do with her?' says I. 'Take her home,' says all three of 'em; 'we're going to have a hospital for such poor sick cats.' Jim he laughed so he 'most fell off his stool; but the little fellows didn't care, not a bit; they just marched off with that thin kitten, just as happy as lords. After that they come with their father on my car of a morning, and pretty soon he put 'em in my care, and so they goes up and down every day. I call 'em the brown boys, on account of their clothes, and they don't mind. They're real brave little boys, and some day, like as not, you'll hear of them a fightin' to save other folks besides kittens' lives. Here's askin' your pardon for having said so much."

The very next Saturday morning I found all three of the brown boys waiting for me on the corner, and after I was safely out of the car and they had shouted a "good-morning" to their friends, the driver and the conductor, we hurried down the cross street. Going in at the garden gate,

the boys explained that they were going to play I was the President Surgeon of the United States come to inspect their hospital, so they were very dignified and very polite while they marched me down a long path to the foot of the garden, where stood what had once been a tool-house, but now I read in very large black letters over the little door—"Hospital for Aged and Sick Cats."

"Jamie, our big brother, painted that when he was home last summer. Isn't it lovely?" Ammy inquired, as he opened the door, and then the three, with very low bows, invited me to please inspect.

Such a nice hospital and pleasant home as it was. The boys had covered the floor with pieces of carpet, and papered the walls with *Harper's Weeklies.* The sick pussies, and there were seven of them, were lying in comfortable boxes filled with clean straw, and each had a nice piece of blanket for bed-clothes; a tidy little shelf held a row of wise-looking medicine bottles, beside spoons and saucers.

"Papa gives us medicine, you see," Sammy explained; "catnip tea, and valerian, and he sets their legs, too, when they are broken. He's a doctor, you know. In the summer mamma lets us pick just as many violets and pinks as we want to for the pussies to smell of, and every bed has a bouquet beside it, just as they do in the real true hospitals.

Now you must ask the patients if they are well taken care of; that's the way they always do."

And so I did, but the comfortable pussies only purred a little louder, as if to tell me how happy they were. And when one very black, wild-looking old gentleman cat, with his head tied up in a red flannel bandage, opened his mouth very wide, I felt quite sure *he* was going to ask for something that wasn't on the day's bill of fare; but instead of that, he only yawned so far and long that it was very fortunate the bandage held his jaws together, or they would certainly never have met again, and then rolled over for another nap.

"Do the cats always get well?" I asked Dick, while the other two were petting and stroking a miserable-looking kitten.

"Oh, no, sometimes they can't live any longer, anyhow, and we bury them in the nicest place you ever saw. Come and I'll show you."

So leaving the hospital and its well-cared-for patients behind me, I followed the little boys down another long path, past a smooth, sunny piece of turf where the convalescent cats rolled and slept in the summer, to the last resting-place of the cats who couldn't get well. A rose-tree waved over it, and the boys told me that the little plot of ground was

blue with violets in the spring. The little mounds were neatly kept, and a hedge of catnip guarded the whole, instead of a fence.

A robin flew on the rose-tree as we walked away, and twittered a little song. "Boys," he seemed to say, "boys, boys! Three brown boys! three blessed boys!"

"Does the inspector-general find everything to his satisfaction?" The three suddenly turned around, and made me a very low bow when Sammy asked this question.

"Everything, my dear sirs, meets with my entire approbation," I answered. "Your system is perfect, your sanitary measures all that could be desired. Allow me to congratulate you and offer you a slight token of my regard," and I pressed papers of chocolate drops into three fat hands.

The brown eyes that had all this time been growing very round and wide open, winked and looked merry at this ending to my solemn speech. And with ever so many good-bys, and more kisses than I guess inspector-generals usually take, I said good-by to the three brown boys and their hospital. But we'll pay them another visit some day. There is ever so much more for me to tell you about them.

# THREE PAIRS OF SLIPPERS.

DAISY, Dorie, and Alice were three little girls of very nearly the same age, who lived on the sunny side of that long street in Westover that leads away from the public square out into the real country.

Daisy's real name was Margaret, and Dorie's Dora; but no one ever called them by their real names—not even their own mothers; for Daisy looked ever so much like the little white flower, and Dorie was breezy, and talked a great deal.

Daisy lived in a beautiful stone house, with a broad sweep of lawn in front of it; Dorie, in a tiny little bower, half hidden behind its rose-trees and ivies; and Alice in the old-fashioned house on the corner, under the shadow of the great elm-tree where, her grandfather was fond of telling, Lafayette sat one afternoon to enjoy the glory of the sun's setting among the beautiful Westover hills, during his last visit to America.

All the little girls were of about the same height, and went to school in pink dresses, white aprons, and white sun-bonnets, and these were so large that they looked for all

the world like *bonnets* out for a walk, and not heads and faces with bonnets *on* them; and they all looked so exactly alike, and were almost always together, that this was the only way in which they could be told apart:

If a white bonnet, over a pink dress, walked slowly down the street, and stopped to look at everything, everybody would say, "That's Daisy." If it skipped along on the very tips of dancing toes, and left rags of pink and white on the hedges and fences in passing, "That's Dorie!" But the sun-bonnet that always went round all the ant-hills instead of stepping *on* them; that had a speaking-acquaintance with all the dogs in Westover, no matter how forlorn and yellow they were; and always picked all the dandelions when they were in blossom, so as to give a chain of them to every ragged boy and girl she met, was Alice.

The three little girls were very fond of reading fairy stories, and if they were not in school, or playing at doll housekeeping in Daisy's beautiful nursery, they were sure to be curled up in a bunch under the great elm or behind some door, reading, all three, out of the same book.

In a little while, as they had only a *few good* books, they soon knew many of the stories by heart, and played at being Cinderellas, and Bluebeard's wives, or "Beauties," with the rose-bushes for "Beasts," by the hour together.

The great stone vases on Daisy's lawn had belonged to the "Forty Thieves" ever since they could remember, almost. Alice's cat and Daisy's parrot were *sure* to announce themselves as a prince and princess suffering under a cruel enchantment, some day, the children thought. But the story which interested them most of all, perhaps, was one which Daisy's nurse told them very often, of a little girl who, having tried very hard to be good for a whole week, and having been very good indeed, found on her window-sill, the morning after midsummer night, a pair of glass slippers.

When she had put them on and went out to look for fairy-land, she had all sorts of adventures. The birds and squirrels talked to her, fairies came out to see her and made her lovely and wonderful presents. Best of all, she was invited to the great midsummer ball of the fairies. "But there were other little girls," nurse Ann used to go on to say, "who, in spite of having been good for the whole week, needful to earn the glass slippers, had at other times a good many faults, and it was when they went out to search for fairy-land, wearing the glass slippers, that the fairies or the birds or somebody reminded them of their faults in some way, and taught them a little lesson they were not apt to forget."

The three little girls thought about this story and talked

of it a great deal, tried very hard to be good for a whole week, and never quite succeeded in being so a whole day, till they were very much discouraged. The worst of all was midsummer week, when, after trying very hard indeed, and having been really very good, they all fell out one afternoon over the color of a new dress for Arabella Ernestina Wilhelmina Gray, Daisy's large doll, and had, what was very unusual, a terrible quarrel—so bad a one that Dorie said she was going home three times, but *didn't* go once, and Alice snapped Daisy's and Dorie's heads off, nearly. It was Daisy who remembered first, and said with such a horrified face:

"Oh, girls, the slippers!"

A dead silence fell upon everybody then, till Daisy's mother who, lying on the sofa in her room and hearing the great noise, had rung the bell for Marie to go to them, stopped her on the way out of the room to wonder what could have happened now. She very soon knew, for the three little girls came crying into the room, to tell her about the fairies they had hoped to see, and now they would be disappointed, for that very day was midsummer.

Daisy's mamma listened, and felt very sorry for them when she found how really unhappy their quarrel had made the three little girls. Poor mamma, she had to lie on her sofa almost always and listen to the telling about things,

even if they were very nice, instead of being *in* the good times.

When the children had finished their sorrowful story she said:

"Little girlies, you don't know how sorry I am about this quarrel. So sorry, because when you try hard to do right, even if it is only for the sake of seeking the fairies, it makes every one who loves you so happy. It's too late now, according to your own account, to see fairies this summer, but" —seeing the look of disappointment on the three faces— "suppose I try to think of a story about three little girls who lived—well, we'll say in olden times, and who had some very strange adventures by the help of the glass slippers which they found on their window-sill one morning."

When the children had finished clapping their hands, Daisy asked when she would tell the story.

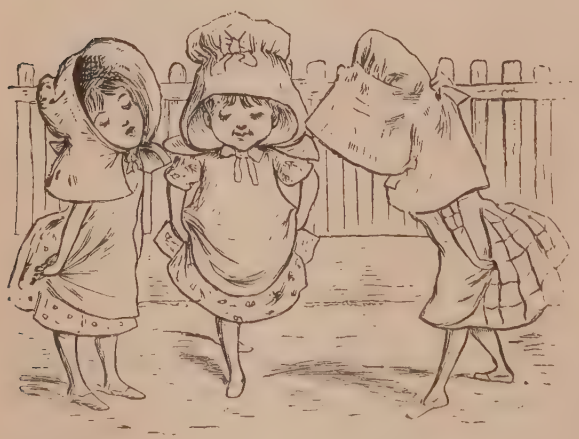
"If three little girls try to be *very* good all the week, and I am pretty well, I will try to have the story ready for Saturday afternoon."

"Oh, how nice!" said all three, and after a little more clapping of hands, the children went back to their doll dress-making.

Saturday afternoon found the promise of trying to be good so well kept, and Mrs. Abbott, Daisy's mamma, so comfortable, that the two o'clock sun, looking into her room, saw

the children sitting around the sofa, in very clean aprons and generally festive appearance, both in dress and faces. And after a little bouncing up and down in their chairs, to be sure that they were really there and very comfortable, and an elaborate folding of hands, everybody said they were all ready, and Mrs. Abbott began:

"Once upon a time there were three little girls, of very nearly the same age, who lived on the same street in a pretty town, and were great friends. But before I go any further with my story let me show you their pictures." So she showed them Picture No. 1.



"Oh, mamma!" said Daisy; "why, that's just like us. See, Alice, they've got on sun-bonnets, and white aprons. Mamma, I do believe *you* made that picture. Did you? and what are those little girls doing?"

"They are all looking at their slippers, and I do believe they are glass ones! Oh, girls, it's going to be a lovely story!"

Mamma only smiled, and went on with her story:

"These three little girls were very good little girls; yes, real good, only sometimes they did a deal of forgetting, or lost their tempers, and each one of the three had a very unpleasant fault, very unpleasant, indeed. Somehow, after trying *very* hard, they succeeded in being good for a whole week, and I wonder how they managed it! I'm sure no one else ever did so. But, at any rate, on the morning after midsummer-night, each of these three little girls found on their window-sills a pair of glass slippers. Just think how delighted and happy they were! and as soon as breakfast was over and the white sun-bonnets were found, they all ran out at about the same time and met. Well, shall I say their names were Daisy, Dorie, and Alice, and that they met in Alice's garden?"

"Yes, yes," said the children; "just as if it was us. *What* a nice story it's going to be!"

"Then the children met in Alice's garden," said Daisy's mamma, "to compare slippers; and they were all very sure nothing half so beautiful had been seen before. The dew on the grass had not dulled them as they ran through it; no, the glass only seemed more brilliant than before. The little girls couldn't find words enough to tell how comfortable they were to wear, and nearly the whole morning was spent

in talking about them. At last somebody remembered that they must find the way to fairy-land, and after spending a good deal more time in talking about the way to go, they decided that each had best go alone. Daisy said she would walk through the meadow if Dorie would go down by the river, and Alice over the hill. So each set out on her travels. Daisy thought it would be very nice to wear her best hat with the glass slippers, so she put it on, and starting out of the back gate, crossed the lane and climbed the fence into the meadow. Nothing happened at first as she walked slowly along, stopping to look at everything and anything, as she always did.

"She could understand what the birds were saying about their house-keeping and the children's appetites, and a squirrel called out to her from an oak-tree to come and have a nut; but Daisy went on till there came to meet her the funniest little man she ever saw in her life. His jacket was made of a gooseberry, with a good deal of frill around his long neck; his nose was very long, and so were his arms and his feet; he wore a long cap with a very long tassel on the back of his head. Coming up to Daisy, he made her a low bow, and said, 'Your servant, ma'am.'

"Daisy didn't know what to say, and would have been very much afraid of him if he had not been so little. So

she made him a bow, and waited to see what the little man would do next.

"'Where are you going, my pretty maid?' was what he said.

"'I'm going to fairy-land to see the fairies, if I can,' Daisy answered. 'Please could you tell me the way?'

"When she asked that question the little man sat right down on a stone that was in the path behind him, and rolled himself up in a bunch, and laughed, and laughed, till the tears ran down his cheeks. Poor Daisy didn't know what to make of this, and was growing very uncomfortable, before he said:

"'She wants to go to fairy-land. Oh, my! oh, my! And she's always late for school, and late for breakfast, and everything else. Do you think the Queen of the Fairies lets her subjects walk this way?'

"The little green gooseberry man jumped up from the stone, and pushing Daisy out of the path and against the tree, where she stood, too astonished to move, began walking up and down in front of her, taking very long, slow steps, laughing all the time.

"'Do you suppose,' he went on, 'that our Queen would let a subject of her's go to school in this way?' walking up the path slowly, 'or down to breakfast in this way?' pretend-

ing to take very slow steps down a flight of stairs. 'No, indeed; and the people who visit her land have to be up for breakfast every morning, and not stop to look at things on their way to school till they are half an hour later than everybody else. Come, I'll teach you how to walk. In fact, that's what the Queen sent me out to meet you for.'

"So how do you think poor Daisy spent the rest of that lovely midsummer-day but in walking up and down the path, with the little green fairy following close behind, counting 'One, two, three. A little faster; turn out your toes; don't stop to watch those birds—they have their own work to attend to; faster, faster now;' till poor Daisy was so warm and tired she only wanted to run away home, without seeing anything more of the fairies.

"Here is a picture of Daisy and the little green fairy showing her how she walked," mamma said, and showed them Picture No. 2.

"When the sun had set behind the hills, and the long shadows lay on the grass, the little man finished his

lesson with this speech: 'Now, go home, and remember what I have told you, and don't be so lazy all the year to come; and perhaps next midsummer-night the Queen will send you an invitation to the ball. It will be written on a rose-leaf, and you can't mistake it. You're a good little girl —yes, and a nice one, too; only what's the use of being lazy?' When he had said this the fairy slipped under a burdock-leaf and was gone.

"So Daisy walked home, not slowly, though, for she remembered the little green man's lesson too well for that, and made up her mind to earn her invitation to the next year's ball.

"Dorie started off in such a hurry that she forgot all about her sun-bonnet, and danced down the street toward the river without having any adventures, till, when she was very near the bank, a little bird called out, 'Dorie, where are you going?' And with her head in the air, looking in astonishment at the bird (here *you see her* in No. 3), she walked on past some

ducks who were talking about the weather, and straight off the bank into the water! She wasn't drowned—oh, no indeed; for when she came up after the first plunge, the drops of water ran off from the green and black feathers that had taken the place of the white apron and pink dress, and her nose and mouth were a broad, yellow bill. The ducks who were standing on the shore didn't seem at all surprised, for one of them came, and looking at Dorie, the duck, as she sat on the water, said:

"'Where were you going, little girl, when you fell into the water?'

"'If you please,' said Dorie, looking down at the feathers in great surprise, and opening her bill very wide when she spoke, 'I was going to fairy-land, and I fell into the river. Do you know how I came to have feathers, then; and will I *ever* get home again? I know my mother will miss me soon.'

"'Oh, yes,' said the duck who had spoken before, 'you'll get home again.'

"'Must I always be a duck? Can't I *ever* wear dresses again and a sun-bonnet? My mother wouldn't know I was *her* little girl.'

"'Feathers can't be torn like dresses,' quacked the duck. 'You must learn to be more careful, walk more slowly, and

not tear your dresses, before you can go to fairy-land. The queen sent me to teach you, and you're a good girl to think of your mother,' said the duck, in a pleasanter voice. 'But my! to think of your expecting to go to fairy-land, and always tearing your dresses and falling over things! Come, I must teach you your lesson.'

"So Dorie spent her day in learning to swim quietly through the water, with an eye always on the fat skating bugs that the old duck taught her to catch very cleverly, and in forcing her way through the tall weeds on the bank without ruffling her glossy feathers. Very hard work it was for Dorie to learn to be careful, and to watch for anything so small as a bug, instead of passing by in a hurry without seeing it at all. She went home at sunset in a pink dress and white apron again, making up her mind while walking along, as Daisy did, that she never could forget if she tried the hard lesson the duck taught her, and that an invitation to the next Midsummer-night ball would surely come to her if she could earn it by being more careful.

"Alice found on the top of the hill a little red house she had never seen before; so, going to the door, she knocked, and asked a funny old lady who came to open it if she could tell her the way to fairy-land, and was very much surprised and did not like it at all when the old woman said:

"'Yes, indeed, I know the way, but it's not to you I'll be telling it; for there's work for you to do and a lesson to learn before you can go to visit there.'

"'Oh,' said Alice, 'I think it's too bad. Please tell me the way.'

"But the whine in her voice ended very suddenly when she found herself an old lady too, sitting under a tiger-lily bush, with the other old lady sitting close by, her face drawn up in a terrible wrinkle, while she whined at Alice the whole afternoon, in this way:

"'I don't see why you wanted to come here and bother me. I didn't want to teach you a lesson; I'd rather be knitting or paying a visit. The idea that you thought you could go to fairy-land with such a whine as that! The queen only lets pleasant people visit her.'

"And so she went on the whole long afternoon, till Alice made up her mind nothing could possibly be more unpleasant than to be an old woman in a large frilled cap, and be obliged to sit out under a tiger-lily tree, and hear another old lady whine; but she had to listen until sunset, when the old lady who had whined so long, with one touch of her knitting-needle made her a little girl, and sent her home feeling very sure that nothing could possibly be more dreadful than whining, and that, if by giving up that she could earn

an invitation to the ball, *she* would try very hard to deserve one.

"This is how the woman looked when she whined," said Daisy's mamma, showing them Picture No. 4.

"When the little girls met again in Alice's garden, and told their adventures, and how that none could go to the great ball till they had overcome their greatest fault, which would make them otherwise so disagreeable to the queen, everybody looked surprised, and perhaps ashamed, till Dorie—who always had something to say for herself and the others—broke out with:

"'If curing a bad fault is all, we might just as well have stayed at home, for my mother reminds me about mine almost every day; but perhaps it's the seeing how horrid it was ourselves, really, and the teaching us not to forget, was the reason the glass slippers came. Let's try to earn our rose-leaf, no matter if it's very hard indeed.'"

Here the story came to an end, and as Mrs. Abbot began to fold up her pictures, Dorie took the one of herself walking into the river, and looked at it soberly.

"It's just like me, and I guess you meant it for me, didn't you? I walked into the pond once when I was looking at something. Perhaps I *could* learn to be careful if a duck taught me. It would be so funny! If I think about the story and try now, would you give me the picture? It was me you were thinking about when you wrote that, wasn't it, auntie?" for all the children who didn't belong to her called Mrs. Abbott auntie.

"And me, too," said Alice, "because I *do* whine ever so much. Can I have my picture?"

"My gooseberry man's isn't nice one bit, because he's laughing at me; but I guess I'll take him to remember by, if the other girls take theirs. Say, mamma, really and truly you know there aren't any fairies; only if you make believe very hard, it seems as if there were. Ann told me so last night. I think it's too bad, though. But were you thinking about us when you wrote it?"

"Yes, dear, I had you all in my mind when I thought about the story and drew the pictures. It is very nice to believe in fairies; but, dear little girls, surely there is something much better, a much higher reason for trying to be

good than for the hope of being invited to a fairy ball. First of all because it pleases the dear Lord so much when His children are overcoming their bad habits, and, too, because it makes so much more comfortable and happy those around you. I'll have these little pictures framed, if you think they will help to remind you, and hung where you can look at them every day. Will you remember that a fault overcome is a 'long step taken in the way in which we all want to walk, toward that beautiful city we were reading about last Sunday, the New Jerusalem?

The funny little pictures hang each one over a white bed, and they have been very good reminders, too, for Daisy hasn't been late at breakfast in a long time; Dorie has really worn a dress for a week, and there isn't a bit of a tear in it; and as for Alice, if she ever does forget and whine a little, one look at her little old woman is sufficient to bring the smiles back again.

I wonder if there are any other little girls who need some pictures drawn for them? If there are, perhaps looking at these will help them a little.

Wouldn't it make me happy to know that it did!

# THOSE BOYS AND GUSSIE.

"AUGUSTA CASBROOK DAVENPORT, JANUARY, 1878." Gussie wrote the words slowly, in her very best and roundest hand, on the fly-leaf of her new diary; her mouth following every stroke of the pen, with an up twist for the l's and t's, and a down twist for the tails of the g's and p's.

"There!" she said, with a long sigh of relief when the page had been carefully dried, "that looks beautiful; almost, no, not *quite*, as well as Miss March's writing," stopping to look at the prim letters critically, with her head on one side; "but it's like hers anyhow," cheerfully, "and now I ought to begin writing in it right away, or I shall forget what happened."

Every day in the week was carefully marked and dated in the new journal, with such a number of lines reserved for each day. Gussie wondered how she could ever fill them all. But there is nothing like making a beginning, and this is how she began:

*Tuesday, January 1st.*—This is the first day of the new

year, and it's vacation. New Year's day is a day to make good resolutions on. I am going to resolve not to get out of patience with those boys so often. Mamma thinks this is a good resolution to make. It was very cold to-day. Papa took us all to ride after church, and I stayed up in the parlor till ten o'clock.

*Wednesday, January 2d.*—It was very cold to-day, but the sun shone. I went out to slide with the boys in the morning, and Jamie pushed me down; he is a mean, rough boy. Went out to walk with mamma and Miss March this afternoon.

*Thursday, January 3d.*—It rained and the wind blew to-day, and the boys had to stay in the house. We made molasses candy to-day, and Dick took bites out of the candy when we were pulling it, and I locked him up in the pantry, and he got out of the window and chased me upstairs to rub my face with a wet towel. I wonder if every girl's brothers are horrid, like mine. Then we went to bed.

*Friday, January 4th.*—It rained and the wind blew all day. The boys had to stay in the house. They played circus and Indians in the school-room. They made an awful noise. The boys wanted me to come and be "Minnehaha," but I wanted to stay with Miss March and learn to crochet. I shall be real glad when vacation is over and the boys

have to study; they make so much noise. Then we went to bed.

*Saturday, January 5th.*—It was pleasant to-day, and the sun shone. The boys played "Duck on a rock," and I played with them, till Harold said I tried to walk like Miss March, but I couldn't, because my dress was too short; and then I was mad and went in, though Jamie tried to coax me to come back. Boys are awful teases, anyhow. In the evening we had "magical music," and darling Miss March played, and then we went to bed.

*Sunday, January 6th.*—We all went to church this morning. I wore my lovely new striped brown stockings, and Bob called me a giraffe, right coming out of church. I wouldn't sit with the boys this afternoon, and papa read in "Golden Deeds" to them. I missed it, and I almost cried. We went to church in the afternoon, and in the evening papa talked about our being gentle, polite, and unselfish to one another; of course he meant the boys. Then we went to bed.

*Monday, January 7th.*—It rains hard to-day, and the wind blows——

Gussie stopped to stretch her cramped hand and wiggle her fingers. Mamma came into the room just then.

"Writing up your diary, little girl? That's nice. I'm

sorry papa forgot all about it until Saturday, and you have had so much to write up; but don't let it get behind now, even a day, through any fault of yours. I can remember my first diary, and how hard it was to find anything to write about, because I hadn't any brothers or sisters; but you have nothing of that kind to complain of, fortunately. Let me see what you have written."

Mamma's sweet face grew a little grave as she looked over the carefully written pages. So sober that Gussie said:

"What is the matter, mamma; haven't I written it neatly?"

"Very neatly indeed, Gussie; but tell me, dear. You wrote down how Bob called you a giraffe. Don't you think it would have been fair to have remembered that he came and begged your pardon after you had gone to bed? or that Harold played dominoes with you for an hour before tea, to make amends for your lost game Saturday morning, and that Dick is always anxious his one sister should have the best of everything, from the largest bite of a cookie up? How about the good resolution of the new year? Has it been very well kept so far?"

No, it hadn't been. Gussie was very certain of that, and a whole week of the new year gone already.

"Begin all over again, right straight off," said her mother, stopping to smooth the rough brown head on her way out

of the room. "Begin all over again; this stormy day is an excellent time. Hark! there is some one of them calling you now, and you wont have one moment to waste before beginning to be patient and obliging."

For a chorus of voices was rising from the lower hall.

"Gussie!"

"Guss!"

"Miss Davenport!"

"A-gusta!"

"Where are you? Come downstairs! We are going to play Turks and Russians, and there aren't enough Turks to hold the fort, because the Russians have got Maria Matilda. Come on down!"

"Those everlasting boys!" Gussie couldn't help it, it would come out; and then she felt better, and made up her mind to be obliging and be a Turk.

"I'll come in a minute," she called over the baluster, and then ran to Miss March's door to tell her the morning lesson in crocheting must be given up, while the combined forces were gathering up raw material in the shape of hassocks and sofa-pillows to be used as battering-rams and cannon-balls, uniting in making as strong as possible the redoubt built of arm-chairs and school-room benches, that the Russians were going to take—if they could.

Miss March was Gussie's last love. Jamie used to say that Gus was always falling in love with some other girl; but this time it was with a real young lady, bright, pretty, and very good-natured, who wore bright ribbons, high heels to her boots, very long trains, and a great many little rattling and ringing things on her bracelets. Gussie was twelve, and twelve was quite old enough, she was sure, to give up playing with boys, and be almost a young lady. So she gave herself a good many airs, tried to hold her hands, and say "Oh my," as Miss March did; and that was really more than the boys—her five brothers and three cousins—could stand. For Gussie, when she *was* Gussie, and not trying to be some one else, was capital company; the best shot in a pillow fight, the surest catch in a game of ball, and a splendid hand at "making believe" in any game.

And now, while the boys are collecting their pillows, and Gussie is getting downstairs, I ought, in justice to the Russians encamped in the Davenport hall that day, to tell you something about Maria Matilda. I couldn't tell you all about her possibly, for the young person in question is a good deal older than I am; but in spite of age, as Dick says, "Maria Matilda's bumps are no fun."

She is a large doll, who used to belong in the very beginning to Mrs. Davenport's mother; a doll with a cloth

body, so well made that, in spite of the three generations of children and many battles she has lived through, she is *almost* as good as new, with only one leg and one arm, and a curiously *wiped out* expression on her wooden face. Nowadays she is used as a cannon-ball, and very hard thumps she can give, as the boys well know; so that when she was won in the "drawing" by the Russians, Dick, who was Pasha of the Turkish troops, and obliged to stand in the arm-chair to direct his troops and watch the enemy, made a fez of an old red comforter to protect his head. It was in the rules of the game that when Maria fell inside the enemy's lines she was to be handed—not thrown—back to her rightful owners for use again.

"All ready?" shouted Dick. There was a sound of scrambling about on the other side of the closed door as the Russians gathered in the hall, and Dick hastily delivered his last instructions.

"Got all your ammunition?" looking over the piles of pillows and hassocks gathered behind the redoubt walls. "Archie, you aim for Bob with the big sofa-pillow; and Guss, you take Harold in the legs if you can with a hassock when he isn't looking, and I'll aim for the colors. Now watch the doors!"

For there had come a call of "Ready!" from the hall,

"For the Russians with a rush and a scramble."—Page 39.

and after that a deep silence; not even the sound of a footstep could be heard.

There were two doors, through either or both of which the enemy might fall upon the besieged—the door that opened from the hall into the school-room, or the one by way of the dining-room; so to-day, as usual, there was the anxiety of watching and wondering through which door they would come.

"Oh," thought Gussie to herself, as she took her place behind the wall and prepared a hassock for action, "how stupid and rough this is! I wish I was Miss March, then I wouldn't have to play with the boys; but I *did* think I'd try, and I *will!*" And Gussie bobbed up to take a good aim at the enemy's legs, and then bobbed down out of sight again. For the Russians—with a rush, a scramble, and a shout that did credit to four pair of strong lungs—had made a rush through the dining-room door, and ran toward the redoubt.

Maria Matilda flew thick and fast. It took one Turk nearly the whole time to pick her up and hand her back again. Dick made the color-bearer's life a burden to him, while Archie extinguished Bob under the great sofa-pillow; Gussie threw her selfish thoughts and repinings with the hassocks at the enemy.

It was a hard struggle. Again and again there was a

truce, while the breathless soldiers gathered up ammunition and repaired damages before the Russians were victorious. Twice a well directed blow from Maria Matilda sent Dick from his chair to the floor; but each time he was up again, winking very hard to be sure, to keep back the tears, but keeping them back and defending his fort till the last, even when one Turkish soldier after another was dragged over the ramparts as a prisoner, and Gussie and the Pasha were the last men left. Then how bravely he fought for her when the Russians were trying to capture Gussie, dodged Maria, warded off pillows, and generally behaved as a brave man should, until he was overpowered.

Somehow, in the battle, Gussie had fought off her enemy —the enemy in her breast I mean—that wanted her to turn up her nose at the boys and their fun. So the battle ended in victory for the Russians, all owing, no doubt, to their having so superior a weapon. And then came a war-dance by the whole military force of both armies, in the hall; till even mamma, who was used to noises if ever any one was, looked over the baluster to see what *was* going on. And Miss March came down to play quadrilles and waltzes for them in the twilight.

After tea Bob proposed "Come, still come," but Harold shouted:

"No! Gus would like to play 'Magical music,' I know. She was a brick to be a Turk when she wanted to stay with Miss March; so we'll play that"—with a rough hug for his pretty sister, and a sly tweak of a brown curl to cover up the caress, as he passed her.

But Gussie didn't care, even in spite of tumbled ruffles; and the evening, though she had a good many little opportunities to practise patience among so many boys, was a very happy one. So happy that, when bed-time came and Gussie was finishing up the record of her day in the new diary, she added, after her remarks about the weather:

"Patience is a very good thing to have if there are boys in the house. You can have a good time with boys if you are patient. I mean to try to be patient, and not mind more than half what those boys say when they make remarks."

# JESSIE'S JOURNEY.

"YES, she's very sick, and this last letter says her symptoms are not as favorable."

Jessie sat up in bed to listen.

"But you don't mean to say they do not think she'll get well?"

"I don't know," and grandma drew a long sigh. "My dear child is in God's hands; but I do wish there was some one to take jessie home. Her mother wants to see her so much."

"There's almost always somebody going that way," said the kind voice consolingly. "Why, it was only yesterday that Miss Adams went to Albany; now there *was* a chance!"

"If Jessie was only as old again as she is now, she could go alone."

"I could now," Jessie whispered to herself, crawling down under the bed-clothes, shivering with cold. "I could now, when mamma is so sick and wants to see me. Oh, how I want to see her! Dear mother, I know she'd get well if I was at home to make her some toast. She says I can make

it better than any one else; and she likes to have me sit by the bed when her head aches. It's only to get on the train (and I know the way to the station); and when I get there, Tom, the baggage-man, that used to live at Aunt Annie's, will take me home. I've got enough money. There's ever so much in my savings bank. Papa gave me half a dollar when I came away, besides. And there's Aunt Annie's beautiful five-dollar gold piece. She wouldn't care if she knew I wanted to spend it to go to mamma with. Perhaps she does know." For the Aunt Annie, who had gone to Paradise only a little while before, was still very dear and real to the little girl.

Jessie had been crying softly to herself all this time, and now she sat up in bed again to look about her.

Grandma and her visitor had gone downstairs. Jessie could hear their voices away off in the distance. There was only the red glimmer of firelight in the room beyond; but the moon was looking in at the south windows in a friendly, cheerful way, and it was quite light enough for Jessie to see even the figures in the pictures on the wall.

"I'll get up and count my money now, because I *must* start home in the morning," said the little girl, scrambling out of bed, and then back again with the precious bank in her hand. Fortunately it could be opened without very much

trouble, and in a few moments quite a stream of ten and five cent pieces and pennies were running out of it and down on the counterpane. So many that it took quite a good while, and all Jessie's fingers and thumbs, to count them.

"One half dollar; two ten-cent pieces; one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight five-cents, and some pennies. That's, that's——" and Jessie went all over it again, counting carefully on her fingers, "that's a dollar and ten cents, and the pennies besides. Oh, I've got enough. Papa only paid six dollars for me when I came. If you only knew I was coming, mamma, how glad you'd be. I'll write a letter and tell grandma; she'll find it when I'm gone. I can't wait till she's up in the morning. My trunk is too heavy for me to carry, but I can pack my basket that I brought the little kitten in just as well as anybody."

If Jessie ever had anything to do, she never put off doing it till some other time. No, indeed! She did it right off. So now, almost before she had finished talking about it —for Jessie was a great girl to talk to herself—she was out of bed and hard at work.

It was a very full basket when she had finished, and perhaps rather a funny looking one, with a wicker-covered flask of bay-rum tucked in beside a volume of Hans Ander-

sen's fairy stories, and a queer round lump of a bundle rolled up in a piece of newspaper on top of all. But Jessie thought it looked very nice, and almost forgot her troubles while she was admiring it. They all came back though, poor little soul, when she climbed into bed again; and the little girl cried herself asleep at last as the clock was striking nine.

Her grandmother came into the room a little while after, shading the light so carefully from the little girl's eyes that she never saw the funny basket on a chair, with Jessie's umbrella standing beside it on guard.

"Poor little one," she said, looking at the tear-stained face and the still damp pillow, "poor little lamb, she's been thinking about her mother. I hope she did not hear what we were saying to-night; it would fret the tender, loving little heart." Then after a few soft kisses grandma crept away to her own room.

The clock in the hall was just striking six when Jessie woke up the next morning. She was out of bed and groping about for her clean stockings before it had finished striking, and the broad band of rosy light had not had time to grow much broader or brighter before she was ready for her journey, in a clean white dress, and her warm blue cloak, but in quite too much of a flutter to remember gloves or such

unimportant things. The little letter left on the empty pillow said:

"DEAR GRANDMA: I am going home to see mamma. She wants me. I have got six dollars, and I know the way. Good-by. JESSIE MURIEL ANDERSON."

Then Jessie knelt down to say her morning prayers, and when she had finished "Our Father," she added, "Please keep me safe all day, and let me get home to mamma, because she's sick. For Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Going softly downstairs, Jessie found the front door unlocked, and ran out of it toward the railroad station without seeing or having been seen by any one belonging to the house.

The ticket agent opened his eyes very wide when this pretty little girl asked him for a ticket to South Haddon; but he was a busy man, there were a good many people asking him questions just then, so that he quite forgot to wonder how such a little girl came to be travelling alone.

"South Haddon?" said the conductor, as he looked at Jessie's ticket; "you'll have to change cars at Albany. Are you all alone, little miss?"

"Yes, sir. I'm going home to see mamma; she's sick, and there's no one to take me. But I don't know how to change cars."

"Bless your heart, that's easy enough! I'll see to that," said the good-natured man. "I've got five little girls of my own, and I guess they'd think I was a funny father if I didn't look after all the little girls that travel on my train. Shall I pull the blind down so that the sun wont shine in your eyes? There you are, and plenty of room left to look out of the window besides."

It was very pleasant to travel, even alone, Jessie thought. There was so much to see out of the window as the train hurried along. The sunshine danced over everything; a baby in front of her nodded and laughed and tried to reach after the feather on her hat; the kind conductor sent her an orange by the candy boy, and Jessie had pennies enough to buy a little box of figs; the boy who carried the water-can was ready to give her a drink whenever she wanted one; a gentleman gave her a paper of funny pictures to look at, and every time the car wheel turned around she was getting nearer and nearer home. That was the thought that made Jessie forget that grandma might have wished she had waited for some one to go with her. That she was running away, or that any one would be anxious and unhappy about her, never entered the head of the little girl, whose one thought was, "Mamma wants to see me."

"Almost to Albany," the conductor said, as he smiled at

the little girl on his way through the car. But he had hardly shut the door behind him, and was still on the platform, when there came a terrible jar, a crash, the car in front went somewhere quite out of sight, while the car Jessie was sitting in rolled over slowly on its side.

It was all over in a moment. Some of the ladies screamed, the poor little baby cried very loud, and the gentlemen began to crawl out of the car by way of the windows.

Jessie had been holding on to her basket and umbrella very tightly all the morning, and they as well as herself were quite safe, bay-rum bottle and all, when it was all over. Only the loose things in her basket—her thimble, scissors, some peanuts, and her ticket—had jumped out in the crash, and she never saw them again.

"It's because I asked God to take care of me that I didn't get hurt," the little girl thought, when she stood safe and sound and whole on the bank by the side of the railroad track, basket, umbrella, and all, a few moments afterward; for the same gentleman who had given her the paper helped her out through the window and called her a brave little girl.

Then there was a long two hours' waiting before a train came to take the wrecked passengers on to Albany. By that time the same gentleman who had pulled her out of the

"God is taking care of me."—Page 49.

broken car had heard all about Jessie's home in South Haddon, and how anxious she was to get home to her sick mother.

"You are a brave little girl," the gentleman said again, when Jessie had finished her little story; "and I hope your grandmother is not very much worried. I'll telegraph her, and I'll see you safe on board your train at Albany. So keep up your courage; you'll soon be home."

"Oh, I'm not afraid," said the little girl. "God is taking care of me, too. Mamma says He always does, you know."

The pointers on the great clock in the Albany depot were marking four when Jessie and her new friend got out of the train.

"There, dear, sit right down here on this trunk. Porter, have an eye to this little girl while I get my ticket," said the gentleman; and then he ran off in the crowd. And there was a running backward and forward of busy people, a bumping and banging of trunks, and so many strange faces, that Jessie almost felt like crying. "God is taking care of me," she remembered just in time to keep back the tears, and when her new friend hurried back he found a very contented-looking little face on the watch for him.

"South Haddon? Which Haddon? Boston and Albany, or Hudson River line," said the porter, when the gentleman

inquired for Jessie's train. But the ticket that should tell them all about it was missing, and she only knew that her papa's name was Mr. Anderson, and that the baggage-man's name at the South Haddon station was Tom.

"Tom," said one of the brakemen of the train, who was listening, "she's right there; the baggage-master's name at South Haddon is Tom; and a good man he is too. Never fear, sir, I'll put her safe in his care."

For the gentleman had only time to buy Jessie another ticket, and jump on his own train that was steaming out of the station in quite another direction.

Jessie was getting tired. It had been such a long day, she had seen so many new faces, and the noise and the heat had made her head ache long before the door opened, and with a shout of "South Haddon!" the brakeman beckoned her to come to the platform.

The baggage-man was busy over his trunks, and only nodded when the brakeman shouted for him to look after the little girl. The train was almost out of sight when he looked around at Jessie. And then, oh, what do you think? Jessie saw that it was not *her* friend Tom at all, but a strange man whom she had never seen before in all her life.

"Please," she said, "where is Tom, the baggage-man? I want to go home, and he will take me."

"I'm Tom," said the strange man pleasantly, "and the baggage-man too. Tell me where you live, little miss, and I'll take you home."

But when Jessie said Clinton avenue, and Mr. Anderson, he shook his head.

"There's no street by that name here, and I know there's no Mr. Anderson either. Are you sure?"

Yes, Jessie was sure; and besides, there was her name, "Jessie Muriel Anderson, 140 Clinton avenue, South Haddon," in her mother's beautiful writing, written inside her little purse.

"There's some mistake," this strange Tom said, after she had shown it to him. "It's the South Haddon on the Boston and Albany road. You're almost a hundred miles from home. Never mind though," for Jessie was quite ready to cry by this time, "I'll take you home with me to-night, and to-morrow morning I'll put you on an Albany train."

Poor Jessie! Such a queer small room as the baggage-man lived in; so hot and close; so many children all crying at once; and such a warm, tired-looking mother! There were only boiled potatoes and bread and molasses for supper; and Jessie had never eaten on a table that had no cloth before, or with a fork that had only three tines, and if she had not been a very polite little girl she might have said so. But Jessie tried her best to choke the tears back,

and before the family had finished, had gone fast asleep with a piece of bread in her hand. She was so tired.

It was morning when she woke up, very early, but the tired-looking woman was getting breakfast. It seemed a very long weary time to the little girl before the baggage-man was ready to start for his day's work, and a still longer time before she was safe in the train again. There were a good many tears wiped away by a dusty pocket-handkerchief that morning, for it rained inside the car as well as outside, and Jessie had to say "God is taking care of me" over a good many times before it really seemed as if He was.

"Perhaps He has forgotten me; there are so many little girls in the world. Oh, what should I do if He had? But mamma said He never forgot, and I didn't mean to be naughty."

The tears were dropping faster than ever when the train rolled slowly into the Albany depot again, and the conductor hurrying in said, "Come, little girl, here we are." Out in the depot there was the same hurrying crowd again. And—yes! standing close by the train, with an anxious look on his face, stood her own father!

Jessie gave a little scream and a jump, and then for her the clouds all rolled away from her sky, the sun shone, and all her troubles were over.

The kind baggage-man at the *wrong* South Haddon had telegraphed to 140 Clinton avenue. Mamma was better, and papa had rushed to Albany on the first train to meet the tired and discouraged traveller.

Jessie was safe at home at last; had crept into her mother's room, and been allowed to sit by her bed for a little while. Then, safe in her father's arms, she told him the story of her long journey.

"Poor grandma, she has been terribly frightened. As long as you live you must never do such a thing again, dear. Think how terrible it would have been if anything had happened to my little daughter, and we had never found her again!"

"I'll never do so again, papa, never! But I kept asking God all the way to take care of me. He did, don't you think so? because He could see away down in the bottom of my heart that I didn't mean to be naughty."

# AN OLD PICTURE.

IT hung in the great parlor of Grandmother Standish's house in Cambridge—the great parlor where the shutters to the windows were hardly ever opened, or the heavy damask curtains looped back to let in the sunshine, except on Thanksgiving-day, Christmas, and Grandmother Standish's birthday. But one day, that was neither of these festivals, the children went into the room, all by themselves, to look at the great picture; and this was how they came to do it.

It had rained all day long, quite too hard for any one, even big boys ten years old, to think of going out-of-doors, and all the children were quite at their wits' end for something to do. There had been blind-man's buff, and tag, too, up and down stairs and through the long halls, until the baby had been awakened an hour too soon from his morning nap, and the children's mother had said she was really almost distracted! Then the billiard balls had been knocked about for a while on the broken table, in the dusky, dusty, dormer-windowed room in the roof. There had been a quarrel, that

grandma had been obliged to come upstairs and settle with the help of ginger cookies. The two little girls had pined for their paper dolls that had been left at home when they came to visit grandma. The boys, who had made all the noise possible for three healthy boys to make, were not happy even then, and finally had wandered down to the lower hall, where they amused themselves for a while looking at Grandmother Standish's treasures—the queer old swords, in their battered scabbards, crossed on the wall over the mantel, under the dim old picture of a very fierce-looking gentleman in what Amasa called "an iron coat"; at the musket that had been used in the battle of Lexington; the tattered flag that Uncle Miles had carried all through the "march to the sea"; the curious bowls and vases; the old letters, with their many flourishes and great red seals, all of them so carefully framed and covered with glass.

The girls came downstairs, too, after a while, and then —I don't exactly know how it happened, for they had never been in there alone before, or when the room was not opened for company—the five children wandered into the great parlor.

Miles had managed, after a great deal of pulling and pushing—for he was large and strong for ten years old—to get a shutter open. The sun had broken just then out of the heavy clouds that had covered his face all day long, and

a sunbeam stole in at the long window, and lay a ladder of gold across the carpet for the shadow of the leaves to dance up and down on. The sunshine lighted up the two faces in the great picture that hung on the wall just facing the window, and that was what the children were looking at when Grandmother Standish came into the room.

The two little girls were bunched and curled up together in one piece, somehow, on a footstool; Ammy was lying full length on the floor, with his head made comfortable on a hassock; Miles was close beside him, and Jamie on the arm of a chair all by himself. On the wall, in a great gold frame of their own, sitting on a gorgeous sofa, were two quaint little bodies, in the queer old-fashioned dress that little children used to look so pretty in a hundred years ago. The children, looking at them, had been laughing at the funny hat and bonnet, the queer slippers and frills, and then fell to wondering what the little children themselves had been like.

"Wouldn't it have been funny," said Miles, "if I had been born a hundred years ago, and worn that funny hat! Why, it looks just like a girl's hat, and I'd like to see myself wearing anything that belongs to a girl." With an unpleasant emphasis on the "girl." "But I'd like a bite of my great-great-grandfather's apple; it looks as if it was a real good one."

"I wonder what they are sitting in that way for," said Lottie, "and where that room was—in whose house I mean, and what you could see when you looked out of the window, and what that little girl's got a muff for when she's got on white satin slippers, or if there is a story about them. Ah! there's grandmother! Grandma, is there a story about those little children? What is that little girl looking so afraid about? If there is a story, will you please tell us about it?"

"*Girls* are always afraid of something," said Miles, before his grandmother had time to answer. "I wouldn't be a girl for anything."

Nobody seemed to pay any attention to this unpleasant remark. Miles seemed always to be afraid that somebody wanted him to be a girl; though what for I don't know, for he wasn't even a very good-natured boy; so he felt called upon to say disrespectful things about them whenever he had an opportunity.

"Yes, there is a little story about the picture, or how it came to be painted, rather," said the children's grandmother, looking severely at Miles over her spectacles. "Quite a pretty little story too, and I'll tell it to you some time. Not now, though, for the dinner-bell will be ringing in a moment, and some very rough heads and dirty hands—that I could see

even if I were to take off my spectacles—want attention. So run upstairs all of you, as fast as you can."

Then grandma herself stood a few moments looking up at the sweet child faces, and repeated out aloud the words stamped in very small letters on the frame, "Don't be afraid; I wont let anything hurt you," with a proud little smile on her face, before she carefully darkened the room again; for Grandmother Standish was very proud of her old-time treasures, and this picture was the most precious of all.

It was after dinner, and fast getting to be twilight, when the children's grandmother heard a sound of voices, and not very pleasant ones, in the hall, and went up on the stairs to listen. Lottie was saying in a half-crying, very much frightened voice:

"Oh, Miles, please don't send me in there. I can blind my eyes just as well out here, and I truly wont look. No, I wont even open my eyes till you tell me to; but it's so dark in there!"

"You're afraid; that's just what you are! A 'fraid-cat'!" said Miles scornfully.

"No; I'm *not* a 'fraid-cat,' Miles Standish; but it's just as dark in there!"

"Well, then, you needn't play; I guess we can get along without such a girl as you are."

For Lottie had broken down, and was having a quiet cry behind her apron.

"Children!" called their grandmother just then, "would you like to come down in the sitting-room and have me tell you about the picture?"

"Oh, yes 'm! yes, 'm!" shouted everybody. Lottie's tears came to a sudden end, and every one slid and jumped down-stairs, nearly falling over their grandmother, and having to say "Excuse me," every one of them, to her before they reached the bottom.

Safe in the sitting-room, there was nothing for even Lottie, who was a very timid little girl, to be afraid of, for such a bright fire blazed and snapped in the fireplace that no one thought of such a thing as needing lights.

The boys stretched themselves out on the rug in front of the fire, for all the world like three fat puppies in a row; the little girls made themselves comfortable on either side of their grandmother's chair; and when old Mrs. Standish had counted the stitches in her knitting-work, she began:

"It is not so very much of a story, children, this one about your great-great-grandfather and his sister; but you are quite large enough now to understand what a valuable picture it is, and why we think so much of it. Then, too, there's a little lesson to be learned from it," and grandma

stopped and looked at Miles, who only wiggled and said he didn't like lessons.

"The Standish family is a very old one," she went on, sitting a trifle more erect in her chair, "and was an old family in England long before this country was settled by the Puritans. So it is not at all to be wondered at that a Lady Mary Standish was one of good Queen Charlotte's favorites, and that her two pretty little children, Miles and Lottie, who was named for the queen herself, were very often at Windsor, and even used to play with the little princes and princesses themselves. My mother used to say that *her* mother had told her the two little children even attended drawing-rooms. How queerly they must have looked, in the stiff brocades and quaintly-cut dresses that people used to wear in those days. You may be sure they had very pretty manners too, for Queen Charlotte was very particular. They never forgot to courtesy to her, or to say 'Yes, ma'am,' or 'No, sir,' when spoken to."

Every one of the children blushed then and looked shyly at one another, because sometimes they forgot to say "Yes, ma'am."

"Little Charlotte," Grandma Standish went on, "must have been a very timid little girl. She wasn't very strong in all her little life, which was not a very long one, and she

was afraid of strange noises, or to be left alone in the dark, or even of a dark or unpleasant picture. She cried very easily, and never liked to join in any play that had a bear or a robber in it. I guess—and it seems to me just from looking at her sweet, gentle little face—that she liked to be told stories, to sit in laps, and be cuddled, just as little girls do nowadays," said grandma, stroking Lottie's soft hair.

"In those days the great Sir Joshua Reynolds was the court painter, and Lady Standish was very anxious he should paint her children's picture; for of course she thought them the sweetest, prettiest children that ever lived. And they *were* very nice, for Miles was always very fond of his little sister, never making fun of her frights and fears, but always promising to take care of her and keep her safe, as all *manly* little boys want to do, I am sure.

"Now Sir Joshua Reynolds was a very busy as well as a very great man, and besides that, for some reason, he did not like Lady Standish. She knew it, and was afraid that he would not be willing, or would say he was quite too busy, to paint her children if she asked him, and Queen Charlotte had promised to ask him herself to do it. One day, when the great painter was at the castle, she asked him to do so; but Sir Joshua was not at all willing. He said: 'Your

Majesty, these children are just like any other children, there is nothing either beautiful or wonderful in any way about them. If I paint such children I must paint everybody's children. How could I refuse and not seem churlish? Let me turn them over to one of my pupils, I humbly beg you. 'Look, Sir Joshua,' said the Queen, 'there are the children in the next room.'

"Little Charlotte and Miles had been brought to the castle for the great painter to see them, and great pains had been taken to make them look as pretty as possible, you may be very sure, and they had been very careful, in stepping out of the family coach that had brought them there, not to soil the least bit their dainty slippers.

"The gentleman in waiting had brought the children to the ante-room door, and after telling them to wait there quietly until they were called, had gone away. In that room there was a very painful picture. As long as she lived, little Charlotte never got quite used to it. It was the picture of the cruel smothering of the two poor little nephews of King Richard the Third, in the Tower. The cruel bad faces bending over the sleeping children, the pillow that was to be pressed down so soon over their innocent heads, the heavy dark curtains in the background, were all quite too much for the little girl, and she had screamed and cried, hidden her

"Don't be afraid."—Page 63

face, and begged to be taken home, in spite of all that any one could do for her, the first time she saw it.

"Even now, though she had *almost* gotten used to it, and had seen it a great many times, the little girl backed away from it as far as she could, quite to the other side of the room, and sat down on the high sofa against the wall. 'What is the matter?' said little Miles, sitting down beside her. 'Oh, it's the picture. *Don't* be afraid; I wont let anything hurt you.'

"And it was just then that the Queen and the great painter looked in at the children. Of course they heard what the little boy had said. 'Your Majesty is right,' said Sir Joshua; and I crave your permission to paint these children. A boy who is so careful and tender, who is so anxious to protect his little sister, will be sure to grow up a brave man, and I shall be proud to have painted him.'

"So a sketch was made right away of the two little children, just as they had been sitting on the sofa when Sir Joshua saw them first, and from that the large painting was made.

"Did Miles grow up to be a great man? Yes, indeed! and a very brave man, too. He fought a great many of his King's battles for him; he rose to be a general in the

army, and was all his life long as gentle and tender with little girls and women, as careful not to frighten them, and as anxious to take care of them, as he had been of his little sister when he was a little boy.

"That is the whole of my little story. The great picture came to America with the family when your great-grandfather emigrated, and has hung in the parlor of this old house ever since. One of these days, if he lives to be a man, this house and the picture will belong to my little Miles here on the hearth-rug, and the best and truest thing that I can wish for him is that he may grow up to be as brave, as true, and as gentle to all women and girls as was the little Miles in the great Sir Joshua Reynolds's picture.

"Here is Sarah with the lamps, and I see nurse looking in at the door behind her, so it must be everybody's bed-time. Good-night. Pleasant dreams, and a sunny sky to-morrow, God willing; sunny in-doors as well as out."

It took Miles a great while to get out of the room that evening. He fumbled with the door-latch; leaned over the back of a chair, staring at the ceiling; he even turned a summersault on the mat in front of the piano; but even that did not seem to relieve his feelings, particularly as grandma paid no attention to him at all, but kept on quietly with her knitting, and singing a little song to herself as she

knitted. Finally he made a desperate rush and swung himself around the arm of her high-backed chair.

"Grandma," he said, "I'll never call Lottie a 'fraid cat' again! Never! If I can only remember, I'll be good to girls, truly, though there isn't any use in having them."

"My dear, your grandmother was a girl once, and so was your dear mother, don't forget that; and when you grow older I am sure you will think that girls are very nice."

"Perhaps," answered Miles doubtfully; "but I'll be good to them anyhow, and then when I'm a big man and have that picture I sha'n't be ashamed or have to think how mean I used to be to girls."

# ONE DAY.

NURSE said it all happened because Paul got out of bed the wrong way that morning, and when Aunt Mary asked which side *that* was, she said, "And sure and didn't he climb over the foot-board, and fall off and hit his head forninst the wash-stand; and if *that* isn't a gettin' out the wrong way, ma'am, may I humbly ask your pardon what is?"

Before the day was over Aunt Mary thought the nurse must be right, for Paul managed to meet with so many mishaps and get into so many scrapes. The children—Paul and May, Aunt Mary's little name-child—had come up to spend the Summer in the beautiful old house, where so many children had played and grown up before them. Their mother and father were not there, to be sure; but then, as May said, "If mammas have to go to Europe when they're sick, what do you 'spose the little girls do who haven't any Aunt Mary?" and certainly in May's eyes, next to mamma herself, there was no one like her auntie.

There were ever so many nice things at "Ridgeway

House." First of all there was the great lawn, as smooth and trim as velvet, where the happy robins hopped races and hunted for worms all day long. There were the cool places under the cedar-trees, where a boy could lie on his back and look up through the branches at the Summer sky and the light fleecy clouds. Then, on the stone wall that divided the grounds from the street, there were plenty of comfortable posts for seats among the vines, and a great many wagons and carriages were always to be seen going up and down the road. In the hedges were yellow-birds' nests. Paul discovered a new one nearly every day, but I wouldn't have you think for a moment that the little boy ever touched one. He wasn't a mean boy, or a cruel one either. In the large garden at the back of the house each of the children owned a bed. Violets grew in May's garden, johnny-jumpers and sweet peas; but Paul was a practical gardener, and grew onions that the weeds got the best of, and potatoes that never came up; pop-corn, too, he planted; but if you asked the Mr. Crow, who lived in the pine-tree down by the river at the foot of the pasture, what became of that, he could tell you; no one else knows so well. The Alderneys' Summer parlor was the field that slopes down to the river.

James the gardener went to visit them every evening, and he was always obliging about letting boys try milking; but

Paul and May had tried that so often, and sent the milk everywhere but in the pail, that they preferred looking on, and straggling home behind the cows with James, while he hunted for sweet-flag by the river, or told wonderful stories of chipmuncks he had caught when he was a boy.

There were a great many chickens, too, at Ridgeway House, more than Paul ever found time to count, and that without saying anything at all about the ducks and turkeys. It was great fun to feed them, and the children hardly ever missed being around at the chickens' meal time. Oh dear me! I was almost forgetting the horses. Steady old plough-leaders, the gay young carriage horses, and Aunt Mary's sober-minded, middle-aged brown phæton horse; not to speak of the colts, that did nothing at all but kick up their heels and race about the pasture all day long, till they tired out the dogs, who always loved to race with them, and even quite upset the dignity of the children's black pony, so that he often refused to be caught, to draw their little carriage. All these things, besides a swing, croquet set, a splendid teeter, and a play-house, were out-of-doors; and in the house, besides Aunt Mary, there were more playthings in the nursery than the children ever found time to use, and a small bookcase in the library full of children's books. *Shouldn't* you have thought that, with all these things to

make him happy, Paul might have managed to keep out of mischief?

But of course he hadn't the slightest idea of doing anything so unfortunate as making himself a whole day full of trouble, when, just as he was getting up out of bed, he hurried over the foot-board to see what the cat was doing on the piazza-roof, and how she came there. But the bump against the wash-stand must have done it, and from the time that Paul sat up to rub his curly head very hard and wink back the tears, everything seemed to go wrong. Not that he was cross at all. Oh, no, indeed! But, first of all, his boots buttoned themselves on to the wrong feet, the left boot where the right one ought to have been, and the right one in the left one's place; and nurse never found it out until after she had wiped up the wash-bowl full of water that had emptied itself on the carpet when Paul was trying to wash his hands while he stood on one leg. So no wonder that Paul was late for breakfast.

When he heard the bell ring and the dining-room door open, and a delicious fragrance of Indian cakes found its way upstairs, the little boy tried to hurry; tore the sleeve out of a new waist in getting into it; put his sailor blouse on wrong side out; and when at last, after so many mishaps, he was all ready and starting downstairs, slipped up on the

very first stair, and with a clatter and a bump, a bump and a clatter, slid all the way to the bottom, sitting down so hard on the rug on the hall floor that his teeth rattled together. The dining-room door flew open; Uncle David and Aunt Mary hurried out into the hall.

"My dear, are you killed?" was all Aunt Mary could find breath to say; but Uncle David shook his head and said something about carelessness, and that when *he* was a little boy, whoever was late for breakfast went without it.

In the dining-room May sat in her own high chair, eating bread and milk out of her own particular china bowl,

fresh, sweet, and clean as the May blossoms she looked like; but Paul's ill luck followed him there, and trailed the syrup over the table-cloth, made the milk jump up out of his bowl over his face and clean napkin, threw his fork on the floor, and finally upset his milk in his lap and over the carpet.

"Really," said Uncle David, "this is a little too much! Paul, what *is* the matter with you this morning?"

But you see Uncle David didn't know how Paul got out of bed.

After the ducks and chickens were fed, and everybody had been down to say good-morning to the horses, a lady came to see Aunt Mary, and the children were left to themselves. They played croquet, but the head flew off from Paul's mallet because he pounded it so hard against a tree; and they teetered, but Paul fell off and let May's end down with a bounce and a thump, while pretending he was a circus-rider. "Dear me," said Paul, as he sat up to rub his shoulder after falling out of the swing, "who'd have thought that just because I tried to sit on that chair and swing, I would have had such a bounce! But it's just the way. Something's the matter with everything to-day!"

Nurse Sarah came down the path from the house just then, carrying a large package carefully, and with her stiffest cap and Sunday dress on.

"I'm going to town," she said, when the children raced up to ask her. "Mrs. O'Flanagan, as lives in the mill-yard, is sick, and here's some things your Aunt Mary, bless her kind heart! is after sending to her. Be good childers both, and it's something I'll be after bringing you home in my pocket."

May promised to be a very good girl, and she really meant to be; but Paul was quite too busy, trying to catch one of the goldfish hurrying around in the fountain, to answer. It's too bad that he was busy, for who knows how much the promise might have saved him!

It was two hours after that when the children sauntered into the house. The hall was very quiet, only a low grumble, rumble of deep voices came from the library, and Paul caught the words, "Consequently, my dear sir, the moral responsibility is great," as he hung over the balusters. Some gentlemen were talking to Uncle David, that was certain. Aunt Mary was nowhere to be found, and the children wandered from one to another of the cool dark rooms.

"Let's turn a summerset in the middle of every bed!" said naughty Paul; and straightway he set about it, leaving the print of his head on every white counterpane, and of his heels on the pillows, while May floundered after him, after a faint "What would aunty say?"

"They look as if the dogs had been on them!" Paul said as he shut the last door with an approving bang. Everybody'll wonder, and we mustn't tell for ever so long. Now let's go upstairs and finish!" So the two rattled up the servants' stairs and tried the cook's door; but she, wise woman, had locked it, and the next door opened into the garret. Here there was plenty to do, even for a boy who had got out of bed the wrong way; and the children rode on the headless rocking-horse, turned the old spinning-wheels, moused about in the wooden chests, looked over curious pictures in yellow, musty books, and tried on the funny old hats, of which a row hung on nails all down one side of the garret.

"Oh, there's a hat I want to try on!" said Paul, and he dashed out of the garret in too much of a hurry to see that the lid of every chest was open for the mice to run in and out of, the hats lying about the floor, and the old books looking very foolish and uncomfortable, with their leaves wide open or scattered about on the floor. May followed, to find him in Nurse Sarah's room, just carefully lifting her best bonnet out of its large paper band-box.

"Oh, Paul!" she gasped, "what *will* nurse say?"

"I'm not going to hurt it a single bit!" Paul answered,

as he tied a careful bow under his chin, and then took a look in the glass.

Nurse Sarah was very fond of what she always called her new best bonnet; but it wasn't so very new when you heard that she had worn it for the first time the day Aunt Mary was married, and *that* was twenty years ago this very Summer. It was a very well preserved bonnet though; the green ribbons were almost as bright and the roses as pink as if they had just come home from the milliner's; the broad strings had never been tied before. Nurse Sarah thought they were quite too nice for that; so now the stiff bows sat up primly on each side of Paul's ears, more for ornament

than use; for a thump in the crown every now and then was the only thing that would keep it nicely on his head Paul found.

How May laughed! She rolled out of the chair on the floor and grew red in the face. The tears ran down her cheeks, and her apron was nearly all in her mouth, to keep from making so much noise as to bring everybody upstairs, while Paul paraded up and down the room and made fashionable bows before the looking-glass, in the green bonnet.

"Hark!" he said at last, stopping to listen at the window, "true as you live there's a hand-organ!" and without stopping to look around even, Paul ran downstairs and across the lawn to the great gates, where, sure enough, an old Italian was grinding "Captain Jinks," with a skip and a hiccough in the music every now and then, while a very frisky monkey ran about the wall looking for pennies. Perhaps the old man thought that the boys in America usually wore green bonnets when they were playing, for he did not look very much surprised, and only smiled a little, as if he was glad to see them. So the children forgot all about the wonderful headdress, and enjoyed the monkey and the music as long as their pennies lasted. If people laughed and boys shouted as, going up or down the road, they passed the funny group, the children thought it was at the monkey;

and the lunch-bell ringing, and the organ-man going off at the same time, the two ran to the house and into the dining-room without thinking once about the bonnet.

Two gentlemen were walking across the hall with Uncle David, the children saw, as they ran in by one of the long windows, and a strange lady, awful and wonderful in a tall cap and spectacles, was just taking her seat at the table beside Aunt Mary.

"Why, Paul!" said his aunty, looking very much surprised, "where did you get Sarah's bonnet? what does it mean?"

Uncle David put up his eye-glass and looked solemnly at the little boy, while one of the two gentlemen laughed and rubbed his hands in a slow, good-natured way, and the other shook his head and said softly, "Ah, dear me, dear me!"

And all this time poor Paul was getting very red and fumbling with the bonnet strings, trying to untie them.

"You may leave it on," Uncle David said at last, putting down his glass. "Sarah's bonnet, did you say, my dear?" turning to Aunt Mary. And when she said yes, he continued, "Gentlemen, allow me to present to you Sarah O'Neal, for many years a faithful nurse in our family."

Wasn't it dreadful? Paul was so ashamed, that if the

floor had only opened and let him through, or a great wind blown him away, no matter how far, he would have been very thankful; but the floor didn't open, and the wind didn't blow, and there was nothing for him to do but stumble into his chair, while Aunt Mary looked so sorry for him, but very grave; and May was ready to cry from sympathy.

So all through lunch time Paul had to sit, trying to choke down the tears with his bread and butter, and having to answer the lady in spectacles when she asked questions about his father and mother, while the pink roses nodded cheerfully over his head, and the two green bows bobbed up and down with his chin.

All this time I have not said anything at all about Sancho, who is a very important person indeed; but here is his picture for you, with his compliments, just as he looked that day, sitting in the hall on the mat in front of the dining-room door, waiting for the door to be opened after lunch. The reason why I have not mentioned him before is because he had been away all the morning. Generally if any one wanted the children, the

surest way of finding them was to look for Sancho, and wherever *that* fluff of white fur on four legs was rolling, barking, or jumping, the children were sure to be. But this morning in question, when Boz, the shepherd's dog, came up from the pasture to the house for his breakfast, he told Sancho about a delicious bone, saved from his yesterday's dinner, which he had buried, he couldn't quite remember just whereabouts, in the lower pasture; and if Sancho would come and look for it, this generous dog went on to say, he would give him the very juiciest end of the bone. So Sancho had raced off in three wags of his tail, and had spent the morning rooting about in the meadow, never to find the bone at all, till, quite tired out and disgusted, he trotted home to find every one in the dining-room, and the dining-room door *shut;* and dogs, in Aunt Mary's house, are forbidden to go in and out by the windows. So all this time I've been telling you about him he has been sitting on a rug in the hall, watching for the door to open, with his very dirty nose in the air, and his mouth wide open, all ready, but not quite daring, to bark a bark of, "Oh, *do* please let me in." When the door did open, Paul, green bonnet and all, fell over him.

The green bonnet was quite too much for Sancho. What he thought had happened to Paul's head I'm sure I don't

know; but he just tucked his plumy tail out of harm's way between his legs, and scudded off as fast and as hard as he could, and it took May a good twenty minutes of coaxing, with the help of a plateful of chicken-bones, to get him out from under the piazza again.

Paul had to put the bonnet carefully away in its band-box, and spend half an hour kicking his heels against a chair in Aunt Mary's dressing-room, before he could go down to help May in her search for Sancho; and even after he had cleaned every one of his chicken-bones, that pretty dog was not at all sure about forgiving Paul for having given him such a fright, and he eyed him suspiciously, as if he expected to see the dreadful bonnet leap out of Paul's curly hair and nod the pink roses at him again.

"Paul!" somebody called, just as Sancho had finished his dinner; "Paul, May, where are you?" and a white dress, a pink sash, and a pair of white linen knee-pantaloons raced up the drive, scattering the little pebbles right and left.

"We've come to spend the afternoon!" the two explained, when Paul and May had dashed around the corner of the house to meet them.

"Yes, we can stay till half-past five," Nannie Roberts, May's most intimate friend when she was at Aunt Mary's,

went on; "and mother said, if your auntie asked us, we might stay to dinner, and she'd send Tom after us."

"Oh, how nice!" May said, hopping up and down, while Sancho, having recovered his spirits, barked and danced around the two little girls, and the boys stood off and looked at one another without saying anything at all.

"What shall we do?" May inquired, after she and Nannie had exchanged a great many kisses, and Nannie had extracted from her pocket, with a good deal of trouble, a very moist piece of taffy candy for her particular friend. "What shall we do—play croquet?"

"Swing all together in the basket, and get Jim to push us," Paul said, turning a somersault on the grass.

"Go down and see the horses," Sam Roberts suggested, turning a somersault after him.

"Play with the dolls, and see if anything's happened to the play-house by the brook," Nannie put in. And then everybody laughed, because every one wanted something different, and the four settled on a game of "touch the goal," to begin with.

After that they visited the chickens, sailed boats in the brook, had a tea-party in the play-house, and each had a ride on the black pony; and five o'clock found the four resting under a great cedar-tree on the lawn, listening to

one of Nannie's wonderful stories. She could tell such delightful stories, could Nannie Roberts, making them up as she went along, of giants and fairies, and the queer underground world, where the dwarfs are always at work making gold and diamonds!

"You needn't be afraid, there aren't any such things as giants really!" Sam explained, in a lofty, patronizing tone of voice to May, who was shivering over a particularly dreadful story of a giant who was in the habit of walking about in the night, lifting roofs off houses and taking the children out of their beds to make what Nannie called a "children pie." "There never were any giants outside of the picture-books anyway."

"Yes, there are," Paul interrupted; "yes, there are! There was St. Christopher, he was a real, true giant, if he was a saint, don't you know; and there was Samson, and——"

"But nobody ever said that Samson was a giant; he was the *strongest* man," Sam hurried to say, anxious to show his superior knowledge.

"Well, I don't care; there are lots of pictures of giants anyhow, for I've seen them; and there are two giants in this very house," with an impressive pause, till every one's eyes were round with surprise. "On the blue vase, on the

bracket in the drawing-room; don't you remember, May? I'll go and get it and show them to you, if you don't believe me, Sam Roberts!" and away the little boy ran, with Sancho barking at his heels, without even hearing May's horrified, "Oh, Paul!"

The long windows on the piazza were open, and it was easy enough for Paul to climb over the lower half of the inside blinds; for in his zeal to prove that there were giants outside of books, he was not anxious to have any one meet him and ask him what he was going after, as they might if he went round by the hall.

Sancho, with a leap and a yelp, scrambled up after him, and jumped down on the velvet carpet, where his guilty paws sank, as he trotted along, as if he were walking on moss; for well that little dog knew he was on forbidden ground; but how can you expect a dog to mind if his master sets him a bad example?

Paul dragged a chair under the bracket where sat the beautiful china vase his great-grandfather had brought from India when he was a young man. It was set up on the bracket to keep it out of harm's way, and no one but Aunt Mary herself ever dusted it.

It was very slippery and heavy, Paul found, as he lifted it and got down from the chair with it in his hands. He'd

be very careful of it, and bring it right back in a minute, he thought, as he hurried across the room; and he had almost reached the window when, in the half-darkness of the great room, he stumbled against a heavy chair, and in a moment Paul and the beautiful vase, with a terrible crash,

were down on the floor, and of the vase there was nothing left but a great many pieces.

Paul picked himself up slowly and listened. No one had heard the noise apparently, for no one was coming, and the only sound was the thump of Sancho's tail on the floor as he wagged his sympathy.

A moment afterwards Paul, looking very uncomfortable, climbed out of the window and fastened the blinds just as they had been when he came in. Sancho had been told to stay where he was and watch. So the little dog minded, sat still, looking at the broken vase with a puzzled expression, or pricked up his ears wistfully when he heard footsteps pass the door.

"Where's the vase?" everybody inquired, when Paul sauntered back to them.

"I—I—thought I wouldn't bring it," he stammered; "but there *were* giants on it!" But Sam was tired of the subject, and suggested another game of "touch the goal," and they were all scattering to hide from him before May thought to wonder what had become of Sancho. Paul pretended not to hear her question, and ran off as fast as he could to find a good place to hide in.

Aunt Mary did invite the company to dinner, and gave them a little table all to themselves in the great bow-window, with plenty of strawberries, cream, and "lady-fingers" for dessert, and to each a tiny glass of raspberry shrub to drink one another's health in. Nobody laughed or talked more than Paul, or ever tried harder to think he was having a nice time; but away down at the very bottom of the little boy's heart there lay a very heavy load; and whenever he

stopped talking he could think of nothing but the poor little dog, shut up in the dark room with the broken vase, supperless and tired with his long watch. And what made the heavy load in his heart was because Paul knew that he was deceiving. He wanted every one to think Sancho had done the mischief, and he was a coward because he was anxious to have a poor little dog punished instead of himself.

People walked up and down the hall, and Paul's heart gave a great jump whenever they passed the drawing-room door; but no one went in. "If no one goes in to shut the windows till after my bed-time," Paul thought, "then I wont be asked any questions; and of course, if auntie thought Sancho did it, why——"

But Paul never got what would happen then comfortably settled in his mind, and tried hard not to think about it, while Aunt Mary played marches, waltzes, and tarantellas on the piano, and the children danced and hopped about to the music. Still no one went into the drawing-room, and Sancho, after scratching at the door a little, when he heard the fun going on outside, went back to his watch beside the broken vase patient as ever, but trembling with cold and hunger.

Some one came for the visitors a little while after that, and then Paul ran upstairs to bed, without waiting to be told,—a most unusual thing; but the naughty boy was only

too glad to get out of the sight of his Aunt Mary's kind eyes; and he was undressed and trying to make up his mind that perhaps after all it wouldn't matter very much if he didn't say his prayers just for that one night, for you may be very sure he did not like to think how sorry the dear Lord was because he had been such a naughty boy, when down in the hall his quick ear caught the sound of an opening door, and Sancho's yelp of delight as he bounced out into the hall. For, of course, this little dog was happy. He knew that he had not done anything wrong, and had only tried to watch as his master had told him.

Paul scrambled into bed then, and curled himself up in a bunch under the clothes, against the foot-board. He crawled up again in a moment, however, for May was sitting up in her bed, and saying, "What is the matter downstairs?" for doors were opening and shutting, people were hurrying across the hall, and Uncle David saying, "That mischievous dog shall have a good whipping! How could he have knocked that vase over?"

"Oh, the beautiful vase!" and "Oh dear!" and "Oh my!" came from everybody.

"Sancho's done something dreadful!" said May, jumping out of bed and running to the balusters to look over them down into the hall. And Paul followed. He did not quite

like to stay alone in the dark that night, and he was very anxious to know what was going to happen to Sancho.

Something very bad it seemed, for nurse was carrying him, very unwillingly, into the study, and Uncle David was searching for a certain thin rattan in the cane-rack.

Paul shivered.

Pretty soon there came from the study the howls and cries for mercy from the poor dog, who was getting a whipping he did not at all deserve. It was more than Paul could endure; he flew downstairs; a vision in white flashed past the sitting-room door before Aunt Mary's startled eyes, and somebody banged and pounded at the study door. His uncle opened it, looking very much astonished.

"Go back to bed, my boy," he said gravely. "Sancho has been a very naughty dog and has broken the most valuable piece of china in the house; he deserves to be punished!" and he tried to shut the door.

"But he don't deserve to be, uncle," Paul sobbed; "I was the dog that broke the vase—not the dog, but the boy, that did it!"

Then his uncle drew him into the study and shut the door.

May had run downstairs by that time, and her Aunt Mary cuddled her up in her lap while they clung together

in the hall, waiting to hear what would happen in the library; but everything was very quiet there, only a low murmur of voices could be heard, till, after a while, Uncle David opened the door, with Paul in his arms, and carried him upstairs to bed.

"God bless you, my boy!" he said, as he laid the little boy, still trembling and sobbing, on his cot bed; "you have been a brave, good boy, and I know that when you had made up your mind to confess, the worst part of your punishment was over."

And so Paul thought, though he was condemned to spend all the next day alone in his room, and dine on bread and water, for his disobedience. But he was good and cheerful, devoted his day to the mending of all May's old dolls and the writing of wonderful notes, in straggling capitals, to her, which Nurse Sarah gladly undertook to deliver when she was allowed to visit him in his captivity at meal time.

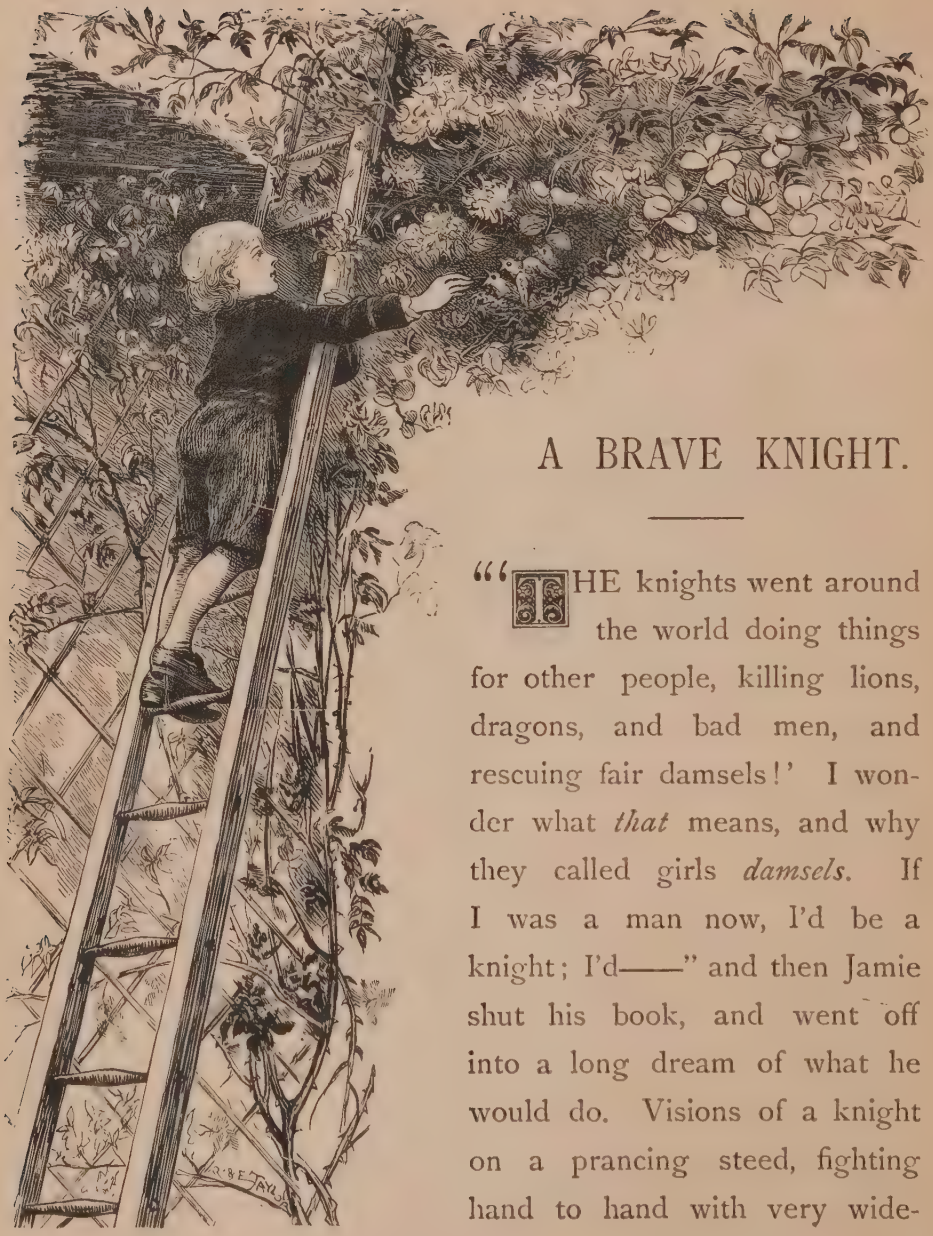
The next day was rainy; the children had to spend the day in-doors; and late in the afternoon, when they were alone in the nursery, on the floor, in front of the fire, Paul told May all about.

"And, you see," he finished with, and a queer little ashamed smile twisted his mouth and made him want to turn his head away from the blue eyes looking at him so soberly, "uncle

didn't whip me. He *talked* to me, and was so sorry, and that was a great deal worse than a whipping, I can tell you,"

And then he begged Sancho's pardon. "But I felt as if I wanted to hide under the sofa, it was so mean to try to put the blame on a poor little dog, when he couldn't speak! Staying shut up yesterday wasn't much; I felt good, you know, all the time, as if I didn't have anything heavy to carry around—inside of me, I mean; but I'm going to try to remember, you see if I don't, for you see it began in the morning, and kept getting worse all day—the being bad, I mean."

And he has remembered, for there wasn't another such a day all that Summer.



# A BRAVE KNIGHT.

"'THE knights went around the world doing things for other people, killing lions, dragons, and bad men, and rescuing fair damsels!' I wonder what *that* means, and why they called girls *damsels*. If I was a man now, I'd be a knight; I'd——" and then Jamie shut his book, and went off into a long dream of what he would do. Visions of a knight on a prancing steed, fighting hand to hand with very wide-

mouthed dragons, passed before the eyes of his brain till he could wait no longer, and, book in hand, he rushed into the house and upstairs to get ready for a crusade at once.

"Perhaps," said Jamie to himself, as he put on his wonderful gilt helmet, his shoulder-straps, and buckled the sword around his waist, "perhaps away down in the large meadow, where the cows go sometimes, right on the edge of the woods, there's a dragon got a cave there, and he never comes out because people don't look like knights nowadays, or he may have been sleeping all this while; or there may be a lion in the corn-field. Anyhow, I'm going to look. It'll be real fun! I wonder if mamma would make me a shield!"

Mamma would make one, it seemed, out of a large sheet of paste-board, and when it was covered with gilt paper, and a very large heart in blue, in the centre, it was just as fine as any knight could possibly wish for.

"I'm going to be a knight, mamma, and may I be yours? Wont you give me something of yours to wear for a gage?"

So mamma fastened a glove in the gilt helmet, and kissed the eager face when she sent her knight away to look for lions in the corn-field. It was a lovely afternoon after a Summer rain. The robins were singing, swinging up and down on the slender branches of the elm-tree, as the wind blew them. Jamie heard Daisy, the cow, calling to her little

calf in the orchard. Reuben was whistling to Rover, the dog, as he walked toward the barn. The hens and chickens, besides all the turkeys, were out for an afternoon ramble. Certainly it didn't look out-of-doors very much as if a lion was about, Jamie thought.

But there was the corn, and it did stand up very tall and close together. There were miles and miles of it, so it seemed to Jamie, and when he looked away down through the corn, as far as he could see, it certainly did look very dark and queer in there. Dark enough for at least *two* lions to live in. Should he go in, or wait on the edge of the field for a lion to come out? Oh, that wasn't the right way at all. Knights always bearded the lions in their den. So, taking a very firm hold of his sword and shield, Jamie plunged into the corn. The long leaves brushed his face, and soon the moisture from them dimmed the glory of the gilt shield. Sometimes the corn-tassels tickled his ears and nose. Worst of all, he could hardly see at all in front of him. Why, a lion could see him first, and jump right on him, Jamie thought, before he would have time to raise his shield.

Hark! didn't he hear some one now? but when he listened, it was only the wind wandering through the corn-eaves to keep him company. After he had struggled in so far that he could see nothing but the thick standing rows

of corn on every side of him, Jamie made up his mind it might be best to wait and see what might happen, for who could tell what *might not* happen in such a mysterious place. It was so dark and quiet, but for the wind. So the little boy crouched down behind a great stalk of corn, and waited for what seemed to him the *longest* time. But Jamie had come out to kill a lion, and he meant to do it. After such a long, quiet time had passed—so long that Jamie had taken to watching the sky through the green leaves, and wondering if he were up there, and had the longest piece of string that ever was in the whole world, and if he were to let it down as far as it would go out of the sky, if it wouldn't touch the ground, or at least the top of a very high steeple—he heard away off in the corn a rustling. "It's the wind," he said to himself, though his heart gave a little jump at the thought of what it *might* be. No, it wasn't the wind, for it was coming toward him, and grew louder and louder.

Jamie took a very tight grip on the sword, and standing very straight, with his shield in front of him, waited, though his heart did beat so fast he could hardly breathe, and it really would have been very much pleasanter to run away home and be safe. Jamie stood his ground, while the dreadful *something*—of course it could be nothing but a lion—came

nearer and nearer, slowly. Now it stopped a moment, and then, with a crash, it jumped over a stick, or a fallen stalk perhaps, in its way. But still it came toward him, till Jamie could see the corn-tops only a little way from him shake as it passed. It was coming! Jamie stood still all ready, and just as it gave another bounce and landed right at his feet struck at it. The dreadful monster gave an indignant *mew!* and lo and behold it was nothing but his own dear gray pussy out for a hunt in the corn, and Jamie had hurt her feelings so dreadfully by striking at her—wasn't it fortunate that he didn't hit her?—that she *would* run away from him, though he followed her away out of the corn, calling her all the time.

After that Jamie thought he wouldn't wait for a lion any longer; he would go on to the woods, and see if he wouldn't meet a dragon. For, of course, if the dragon should see a *real* knight coming he wouldn't hide, as the lion must have done; he would come out to meet him. But there was no dragon in the meadow, and only a cross cow, which ran at the little boy, and carried off the beautiful shield on her horns. Then poor Jamie was so frightened he ran away, and when he got home and told mamma all about his adventures, she felt him all over to be sure the cross cow had done him no harm, and then sympathized with him in his disappointment.

"But," said she, "Jamie dear, there are no dragons and lions to kill nowadays, in this land, where there are so many people and towns, and have been for so many years. Such terrible wild beasts live all alone in desolate, waste places, and knights are not now obliged to ride about the world to kill bad men, and make right the wrongs they have committed. The country is governed by laws now, not by the sword."

"Mamma, I did so want to do something brave, to make you proud of me, and now I can't be your knight at all, because there's nothing for me to do!"

"Yes there is, dear, a great deal. So much that if you could only do *half* of what mamma can think of, she would be so proud—oh, so much better pleased than if you killed a lion."

"Oh, tell me, mamma! What is it? Can't I start out to do it this very afternoon?"

"There are in my boy's own breast wild animals more powerful, if he lets them get the upper hand of him, a thousand times than those St. George of England fought against. Shall I tell you what they are? Indolence, ill-temper, and the fear of being laughed at. Those are your particular lions, Jamie, and they are not like St. George's either—once killed no more trouble to him; but you must fight all your life long, and while you are fighting be doing other work in

the world besides, while the knights gave themselves up to war, and nothing else."

"But, mamma, if I do fight those things, the knights helped '*distressed* damsels,' and other people. What can I do like that?"

"You can help me by running on my errands cheerfully, and plenty of other little helpful things will come up every day."

"Couldn't I take a basket, and go around seeing sick people? I want to do something *really* large, you know."

"No, dear, you are hardly old enough for anything of that kind yet; but," seeing the disappointed look on the eager face, for Jamie was very much in earnest when he was making plans, "I am sure I can find real helpful things for you to do, and if you have your eyes open, and look about you, something will show that needs to be done, I've no doubt. I'll tell you of something now. Pussy wants a bed for her new little kittens very much. They are lying on the hay in the loft; suppose you make her comfortable."

So Jamie played the *cat* was a distressed damsel, and felt very much like a knight while he was carrying the kittens to their new home in the box in the outer kitchen. He told them all about it, too, what he was making believe; but I don't believe the kittens understood, for they only mewed,

and blundered about in the box, trying to get in a warm heap again. Perhaps the old cat did, for she looked *very* anxious to have her children carried safely, and purred her thanks when they were all together again. But the old yellow hen wasn't as grateful, and when Jamie tried to help some of her chickens, which were caught in the long grass, she flew at him, and pecked the good knight's legs till he had to turn and defend himself.

It was only a few days after this that some work came to Jamie in a way no one could ever have thought of. One morning, when mamma went out on the piazza before breakfast, she found lying on the stone step a poor, dying robin, and just as she lifted it, the little bird opened its bill, and, gasping for breath, was dead.

Then she told Jamie about it, and he said:

"Do you suppose that poor dead bird can possibly be the robin which built in the vine over my window? There are three little birds in that nest now, and if their mother is dead, wont they starve?"

"I'm afraid so, unless we can do something for them. But this may not be their mother. You can watch from your window after breakfast."

It was the poor little mother-bird that was lying in the pasteboard box on the piazza waiting to be buried, Jamie

found, for no robin came near the nest, and the little birds were calling for her so piteously, he could not bear to let them suffer. So a "council of war," of mamma, Thomas the gardener, and Jamie, was held. Thomas found that the nest could not be moved without being broken; so Jamie begged that the long ladder might be put up against the house, that he could take care of them.

"You know, mamma, they would like their own nest so much better than a cage, and I can climb ladders. Please let me take care of them," said Jamie.

"But, Jamie, do you know how much care they will be? and if you ever forget them, even for a morning, they will suffer."

"Just let me try, mamma; you know I'm a knight, and I must help people that can't take care of themselves; but *I do hate* angleworms, and I wish robins didn't love them."

Jamie earned his title of knight, I'm sure, by the time he had brought up his family of robins. You may think it was fun to have three hungry birds on your mind all day long; to be obliged to get up long before every one else in the house, to dig worms and hunt caterpillars, or to leave the nicest game of ball or "I spy," to feed those robins; to have the boys call you "Father Robin," and ask after your children in the most public places, such as com-

ing out of church, or when there were ever so many girls around! Jamie didn't! But he persevered, and climbed the ladder regularly, and fed his birds, just as you see him in the picture, day after day, all through the Summer, till they were old enough and strong enough to look after themselves.

Such a worry as Jamie was in when the robins were learning to fly! He fussed over them as much as a hen does over one chicken, and spent all his time watching their first attempts and keeping the cats off. But when it was all over, and the robins had set up house-keeping for themselves, he told us all about what he had suffered. "It's been the awfulest kind of a Summer, and somehow, when I think about it, it's been a real nice one. It's such hard work—this trying to be good. I guess the old knights were glad they had to fight. And then those robins; my! I do hope nobody'll expect me to raise another family! I'd rather saw wood, as Robin does; it's the worry of them, you know, and the having 'em on your mind. But they're raised, and I'm awful glad of it." Jamie drew a long breath, as if a heavy burden was off his mind, before he spoke again.

"Mamma, I guess your kind of knights are the nicest, after all; for you know the other kind kill, besides helping, and your kind don't, so I'm going to keep on fighting, if I don't forget. What will it be?—I mean when will I earn

the prize?—for you know the knights were always trying for that."

"Heaven is the prize my knight must try for, Jamie," said mamma; "and if he only wins that, what does it matter how hard the fight has been! Love God always, and fight the good fight diligently. That means to persevere, and you will surely win that greatest prize of all."

# AN OLD LETTER.

IT was an old letter, musty, time-stained, and worn with much handling; written on such curious paper, too—yellow and coarse, and so thick that none of the many hands it had passed through had torn even its edges. And the queer spelling, the faded ink, and the bold flourishes of the large letters looked strangely out of place on the study table where the bright Spring sunshine was streaming over it, lighting up every faded letter, and touching with gold the three heads bent over it.

"Did ever anybody see anything so queer? Elice, do just look at that B and that W once; and *such* spelling! I'd be kept in after school every day for a week if I spelt words in that way, and put an *f* where an *s* ought to be. I'll bet the man who wrote that letter was an old muff, who thought he knew everything!"

"Let's ask grandma!"

Then there was a scramble and a rush of half-a-dozen feet, and a wild charge up the staircase to the room, bright with flowers and cheerful with birds and sunshine, where Grandmother Earl sat busy with her knitting.

"King Charles's letter!" she said, smoothing it out carefully on the little table that held her ball-basket. "Why, children, how came you with this?"

"Don't you remember, grandma, you said our colds were so bad that if we would stay in the house we might look at the things in the cabinet in the study? This was in a little old black box up in one corner, all wound up in some soft silky stuff, the box I mean; the whole inside was lined with such soft wool, and all there was in it was this old yellow letter. Did King Charles really write that? and what made him spell in such a funny way? and is he the very same King Charles whose picture papa has in his great portfolio?"

Lilly was quite out of breath by this time, and had to let the others finish, which they were quite able to do.

"Of course," said Norman, looking at the letter in quite a different way from that of a few moments before, "if a king wrote it, there must be a story about it. Won't you read it please, grandma—we couldn't make out such funny spelling—and then tell us how you came to have it put away in the little black box?"

"A story," said their grandmother, as she still smoothed the old letter; "yes, there is a story, quite a long one, and you have been such good, quiet children since breakfast, I'll

tell it to you. Not because children ought to be rewarded for being good, but because when you try to please her, it makes grandma very happy to please you."

So everybody made themselves comfortable, Norman on the rug in front of the fire, the two girls in one large chair; and after their grandmother had thought for a few moments, she began her story.

"This letter is dated 18th of November, 1648, and all it says, in spite of the queer spelling, is, 'that if Master Richard Corby will be at the style where the north meadow joins the lane, on Friday evening at dusk, he will find the lass waiting for him,' and is just signed Charles. Now this seems a very simple letter to have been kept all these years before you know just what it really means. How well it is that your papa has been reading English history to you this Winter, and that you know all about this same king—King Charles the First of England. How that he was a very pleasant and good-natured man, but was too selfish to think about the comfort or happiness of the people he was sent to rule over; how that he taxed them to raise money to spend on himself and his friends, and how, finally, he was driven from his throne and obliged to steal away in the night and hide from his enemies; even his little children had to be left behind. After a great many battles were fought

between the king's soldiers and those of parliament, he was captured by his enemies, and finally beheaded. How glad we ought to be that our lives are cast in so much pleasanter times, and that we do not tremble when we are sitting around the fire at night dreading to hear the tramp of soldiers; and perhaps if they should really come, we should be turned out into the cold and darkness, while our dear home was sacked and burned before our eyes. This happened to a great many of King Charles's friends. But though some of these friends were put into prison and suffered a great deal of cruel treatment for his sake, it did not seem to frighten the rest at all, who were just as ready to help him if possible.

"But what a long time I am in coming to my story! In the southern part of England, in those troublesome sad times, there were living with their grandmother, in a great castle, the name of which was Titchfield, three little children, two girls and a boy, and the boy must have been about your size, Norman. These children had no mother, and lived with their grandmother, because their father—the Earl of Southampton, a very great man—spent all his time in London, or with the king's army. Quite too dangerous places for little children in those days.

"These little children had a beautiful home, with everything that heart could wish to make them happy, and plenty

of servants to wait on them. But their grandmother, who was a very good and wise woman, taught them that there was a great deal for them to do in the world besides pleasing themselves, and that first of all, next to God, came the king, for whom they must be willing to do everything in their power—even give up their lives if he needed them; and that next after the king came God's poor people, whom they must always be ready to help, because they had so little to help themselves with. Last of all, they could think of self. If these little children did as their grandmother taught them, they must have been very unselfish, and of course, if they were that, they were very happy.

"Guy, the boy, who was the heir to this earldom, was old enough to understand something of the troubles of his king, and how many, many times after his grandmother had read his father's accounts of the trials and dangers he was passing through with King Charles, the little boy had longed to be large enough to help fight his battles himself. Often when his grandmother thought him busy playing with his sisters, Guy would be in some quiet corner of the great old house, dreaming of the wonders he would do when he had grown to be a man and could work for the king. He thought and talked about these things so much, and was so anxious even then to help, that I am sure he was made very

happy when, while he was a little boy, his chance to help the king came.

"It was one morning in November that a letter came for the children's grandmother, and after that there was a great hurrying to and fro in the castle, and the children could make nothing out of it all but that some gentlemen were expected from the north.

"It was very early the next morning, so early that only the robins were up out-of-doors, that Guy heard a clatter of horses' feet in the court-yard, and looking out of his window saw three men, muffled in cloaks and with broad-brimmed hats shading their faces, ride through the gateway and stop before the steps, where, it hardly seemed possible, stood his grandmother to receive them.

"Probably the little boy only thought then how funny it was for his grandmother to be out of bed so early in the morning, and he may have wondered who the strange gentlemen were, for they were nowhere to be seen when the family met for breakfast in the great hall; but children were not allowed to ask questions in those days, and Guy could only wonder till after breakfast, when his grandmother called him into her room alone.

"'Guy,' she said, 'what two things must you always have in mind to do?'

"'My duty toward God and my duty toward the king,' answered the little boy promptly.

"'Quite right, my boy,' said his grandmother, patting his shoulder. 'And suppose the time was come when you can do your duty toward the king, by doing something for him, are you ready? Can I trust you?'

"'Oh, grandmother!' was all the boy could say; but his eyes filled with tears, though he was not at all frightened, and his cheeks flushed when he found words to say: 'Only try me.'

"I think his grandmother must have been very fond of him then, the heir to all the glory and honorable deeds of a great house, for she said:

"'I was sure I could trust you, and I am going to tell you a very important secret. Guy, the king has escaped from Hampton Court, with the help of two faithful friends, and is here in the blue-chamber.'

"'Then I saw him this morning. Wasn't he one of the men who rode in just as it began to grow light a little?'

"Yes; but no one must know that it was the king. And now, Guy, there is something you can do for him? follow me, and don't forget to whom you are speaking.'

"So the old lady, walking with a slow and stately step, led the way through a dim corridor and across the picture-

gallery to where, behind the hanging tapestry, she opened a little door Guy had never seen before, and right in front of them was a small narrow staircase. At the top of this was another hanging curtain, and when this had been raised, Guy was very much surprised to find himself in the blue-room, where two gentlemen were lounging in front of the fire, and a third writing at a table in one of the deep windows.

"When they saw Guy, the two gentlemen in front of the fire started up and half drew their swords; but the other in the window motioned for them to put them up again, as he came forward to speak to the dowager countess, as Guy's grandmother was called.

"'Is this our messenger?' he said, looking at the little boy. 'Can he be trusted with a secret?' putting his hand on the brown curls, for Guy was kneeling on one knee before him.

"'I am sure he can be trusted, your majesty,' answered his grandmother; 'the boy knows his duty, and it is a wise head on his young shoulders.'

"Guy felt that he was blushing very much at this praise from his grandmother, when he felt a hand put under his chin, and the same voice that had spoken before said: 'Look at me.'

"And Guy, blushing very much, looked up into the kind, sad face of the king.

"After looking steadily at the boy for a moment the king said:

"'If I were to give you a letter to carry to some one —a letter which no one else must see or know about, no matter what happened—and if this person that you were to carry this letter to could only wait for it out in the fields, where everybody or anybody might be looking, how would you give it so that no one would see what you were doing?'

"Guy thought a little while.

"'I would take my little sisters out in the fields, and we could be playing and picking flowers; but——but.'

"'You wouldn't know to whom you were to give the note, truly. It will be an old woman in a red cloak; and you must say, "The ships are riding in Brest harbor," and if she answers "Not all; one is away;" she is the right person. Can you remember all this, and can I trust you, boy? For on your courage and silence my life may hang.'

"Very much frightened by these solemn words, the little boy promised to do his duty; and after the king had said a few kind words, and he had kissed his hand, Guy followed his grandmother out of the room, to think of nothing else all the rest of the day but the king; and, what was of more importance to him, the dangerous errand he was to do for him.

"Guy's two little sisters were very glad to take a ramble with him in the meadow the next morning. The sun was shining after a week of rain; all the flowers and birds were calling them out-of-doors; so, in too much of a hurry to stop for their bonnets even, they ran after him. As for Guy, he had quite forgotten there was such a thing as a hat in the world. The meadows on one side of the castle sloped down to a little river which a narrow foot-bridge crossed to the broad highway on the other side. There were plenty of people passing on the roads—women riding to market with their eggs and fruit; gentlemen riding townward, with perhaps their wives on a pillion behind them; beggars, and, worst of all, plenty of the Parliament soldiers, riding one at a time, or in little companies together, keeping a sharp look-out all about them. But no one thought of noticing, by more than a passing glance, the three children busy with their flowers.

"Guy found it very hard work to answer all his sisters' questions, and not to let them guess how anxiously he was searching the road up and down, and watching all the stiles in sight for the old woman. He had been told that he would see her from this meadow, walking in the road or sitting on a stile; but the morning was wearing on, and he had shaded his eyes from the sun to look down the road

Guy looking for the old woman.—Page 110.

a great many times before he spied her, an odd bundle of red and gray, against the green of the meadow, as she sat huddled upon a stone by the road-side. Long before this Guy had fastened the precious note firmly in the middle of his bunch of flowers; and now, when he saw that it really was the old woman in a red cloak at last, he said to the two little girls: 'You stay here, I'm going to speak to that old woman,' and ran across the foot-bridge. There was no one coming either up or down just then. Nothing could be better, Guy thought, as with his heart beating very fast, and a good deal of a tremble in his voice, he said to the old woman, who was sitting with her head bent down, mumbling over some words in a low tone:

"'The ships are riding in Brest harbor.' And it was a very fierce-looking old woman who started and raised her head so quickly to look at the boy who said these strange words. Her face was brown and weather-beaten, and her eyes very piercing for a woman, Guy thought. And she answered, after she had looked at him very hard for a few moments; in such a deep voice:

"'Not all; one is away.'

"Just as she said this, and Guy was going to give her the flowers, there came around the corner of the road, with a clattering of horses' hoofs and a jingling of swords, three

Parliamentary soldiers riding at a sharp trot. What could Guy do then? He would have given anything to run away from these terrible men, who were slackening their horses' speed to look at this queer couple by the road-side—the little bare-headed boy in his gay suit of velvet and lace, and the old woman. Guy's heart was beating so hard he could hardly breathe, and he almost dropped his flowers, when he heard the old woman say in a queer whining voice, not at all as she had spoken before:

"'Come, little master, gie me a penny.'

"All this time Guy had been saying to himself, 'My duty, my duty; I must do my duty;' so that now he was able to say in a voice that didn't tremble very much:

"'I haven't a penny, truly; but if you will only tell my fortune, I will give you my flowers.'

"How the soldiers laughed at this, and called out to the old woman 'she had made a good bargain;' but she, pretending to be very angry at first, finally took Guy's hand, and, after looking at his hand a moment, told him a wonderful fortune, of how he would grow up to be good, wise, and brave, and have plenty of gold and silver.

"How the soldiers laughed when, after this wonderful fortune, the little boy offered her the flowers again, and the old woman, after a good deal of muttering, took them, and

after picking up her stick from the ground where it lay beside her, hobbled, very much bent over her cane, away up the road. Then the soldiers, laughing loudly, and calling back to the little boy that cavaliers like him would have less money before they had more, rode off.

"Then the little boy, for he was only a *little* boy after all, could sit down and tremble, now that it was all over, before he went back to his sisters, who, fortunately, had been so busy arranging their flowers, they had hardly noticed what was going on. When Guy had told his grandmother of his adventure, you may think how pleased and proud she was of the little boy who had been so brave, when on his words and looks hung the life of a king; for if the soldiers had frightened him into running away, and then if he had been searched and the note found, the castle would have been the first place they would have visited to look for the king.

"That very night King Charles, disguised as a girl, rode away toward the sea-coast on a pillion behind Sir Richard Corby, who had disguised himself as an old woman that he might get the king's letter. Before the king had left the castle, he called the little boy to him, and after thanking him and praising his courage till Guy's cheeks burned more than ever, he raised him from his knees, and, after kissing him, buckled his own sword around Guy's waist, and told him to

wear it when he had grown to be a man, and to serve his country as bravely as he had served him.

"And Guy did grow up to be a brave, good man. He served his king, King Charles's son, as bravely as he had his father. This letter was given the earl, his father, by Sir Richard, and by him given to one of his faithful soldiers who had served King Charles, and we are his descendants. Of course this letter is very precious now as a memorial of a king who died so sad a death, and, too, of such a valiant soldier. But in spite of all the brave deeds Guy did when he grew to be a man, and fought his king's battles, I am sure he never did anything requiring more courage and real manly strength than when he prayed so hard for strength to do his duty that Summer morning by the road-side, when he was a little boy."

# A FOUR-FOOTED FRIEND.

JAMIE had nothing at all to do. That was how he came to get into mischief and be so unkind. All the grown-up people in the house were at dinner. Nurse was undressing the baby; every one was quite too busy to talk to him. So the little boy, when he had finished his supper of bread, milk, and ginger snaps, wandered out into the garden.

Here Jamie wandered up one path and down another till he had skirted the edge of the great lawn, and was quite round the other side of the house from where he had started. The robins and thrushes were singing their evening hymns away up in the tree tops; a few bees who had some extra honey to make up were buzzing about the honeysuckle arbor. Everything out-doors as well as in seemed quite too busy with their own affairs to pay any attention to him, so Jamie walked slowly along till he came to the fountain.

It was not playing just then, but the great basin was full of water; so clear that Jamie could see the gold and silver fish that lived in the fountain going asleep away down

at the bottom, and so deep that water-lilies and tall water plants were growing in it just as they do in lakes and ponds.

Just as the little boy came up to the basin a frog jumped down with a splash from the lily leaf where he had been sitting, and swam slowly toward the edge of the great shell.

Here was something to do, Jamie thought; and running back to the gravel walk at the foot of the lawn, he picked up a handful of little stones and ran back with them to the fountain. Poor little frog! Jamie chased him and stoned him all around the basin till he was quite out of breath and had to sit down on the grass a moment to rest. The frog had hidden himself by this time among the roots of the water plants, and Jamie was wondering while he rested if he could hunt him out into the clear water again if he got some larger stones, when suddenly, with a leap and a scramble, something jumped up on the edge of the basin and winked its eyes very fast and breathed very hard, as if tired. It was the frog.

Jamie was so surprised that he got right up off the grass and ran up to make sure that it was the very same one. And the frog, instead of jumping down into the water again, sat quite still and waited until the little boy was near enough to touch him almost, when he waved him back with his funny green hand, and said in a gurgling voice that

"Do you think that a boy?"—Page 117.

sounded as if he had a great deal of water in his mouth: "Do you think that a boy, just because he lives in the water instead of on land, and wears a green coat instead of striped stockings, hasn't any feelings at all; and that it doesn't hurt him very much to have stones thrown at him?"

Jamie was so astonished to hear a frog speak, that he quite forgot to answer, and could only stare at him, with his mouth and eyes wide open, as the frog settled himself into a comfortable position on the edge of the fountain, and then said:

"Perhaps you never thought before that a frog *has* feelings."

"No," said Jamie, "I never did; and it's only because I haven't anything to do, and there's nobody to talk to me, that I did it, anyhow."

"No one to talk to you! That is very lonely indeed, and I'm all alone too. So how would you like to sit down on the grass there while I tell you something about my family —what a large and wonderful family we are. And perhaps when you know more about us you'll tell the other boys who wear stockings, and perhaps then they wont treat us and our cousins, the toads, quite so unkindly; for a great many boys are very cruel, and often kill and torture my friends and relations just for their own pleasure.

"If you look at me carefully," the frog went on, "you'll see that my coat, which is just as elastic and easy to move about in as your skin, is olive-brown, that is, a greenish-brown; and that on my back and over my legs are a great many black spots, some large and some small; and you must notice particularly the long black mark that commences right under my eyes and runs quite down to the top of my arms, or forelegs, as people call them; for whenever you see a frog with that mark, you may be very sure that he belongs to my family, and our family name is the 'Common Green Frog.'

"You see that there are very few spots on my breast, and that here the color of my coat is a greenish-yellow. My brothers, the frogs who live in the garden when the Summer is almost over, wear very much brighter coats. Sometimes the upper parts of them are almost red; but they change their coats so often—take them off so often, I mean—that it is really very hard to tell what color they do wear. Did you ever see a frog take off his coat? No? Well, I'll tell you all about it. A boy cannot take off his skin, can he?"

"No," said Jamie, "I'm *sure* he couldn't do that."

"I thought not; but this is the way a frog takes his off. First, when it is time for him to change his coat, the

frog rubs his forelegs around his neck till the old coat, or skin, begins to slip away from it. The coat never breaks or tears, but just slides down till he can slip first one foreleg and then the other out of their old covering. Then, with his hind legs he pulls the coat down off from his back, and then there is nothing to do but to slip his legs out of it, just as you kick off your stockings when you go to bed, and then he can hop away in a beautiful new coat that was hidden under the old one before. My hind legs, you see, are strongly webbed, just as ducks' feet are; that is to help me in swimming.

"In the Winter we frogs all go to sleep, and stay all Winter long hidden away under stagnant water or down in the soft mud at the bottom of ponds, and there we sleep until the Spring comes again.

"In the Spring the baby frogs are hatched from the eggs which have been lying safely shut up for five weeks.

"Did you ever see a tadpole, and think that that funny thing, with nothing at all but a head and a tail, was a frog?

"Sometimes there are so many of these funny little things together that they make the water they are swimming about in look black. They eat the leaves of duckweed and other small water plants. When they grow a little larger, some very little bits of teeth come to help them gnaw the

edges of the larger water plants' leaves. When tadpoles are six weeks old their legs begin to grow—the hind legs first—and they grow slowly, and in a fortnight the forelegs, which have formed beneath the skin, peep out. Then the tadpole begins to look like a frog, and a lizard too, until pretty soon the tail begins to wither, at first slowly, but then faster, till in a day or two it is all gone. The little frogs come out of the water then, and walk about on the land; so many of them together sometimes that some people think they *rain* down from the clouds. But you'll never be so foolish as to think that, because I have told you just what they really do. When the little frogs are old enough to walk, they give up duckweed and leaves and begin eating snails and worms and insects. I suppose you think that if I have a tongue it must be fastened in my mouth just as yours is. No; the roots of my tongue are fastened in the *front* of my mouth, so that when my mouth is shut it lies backward, just as if I was going to swallow the *tip* of it; and when I want to catch a fly or a little bug I can throw my tongue out of my mouth a great deal farther than you can yours, and take hold of my food very easily with the help of something just like mucilage that is on the tip of it. I shall not be a full-grown man-frog till I am five years old, and then, unless something happens to me, I shall live to be twelve years old.

"Do you know that if you were a frog you could live under the water, without having a bit of air to breathe, for as many as five days? But you couldn't live so long without any water, in the dry air and hot sun. But we all love sunshine, and are always happy in the sunny days, and none of us can live where it is very cold. Ours is such a large family," the frog went on, a little proudly; "I wont begin to tell you *all* their names, because you never could remember half of them; but the *Green* Frogs are large, like myself; and the *Peeping* Frogs tell when it is going to rain; and the *Bull* Frogs have very deep voices. The *Argus* Frogs wear very elegant, pale, reddish-brown coats; and the *Blue* Frogs live in New South Wales; and the *Laughing* Frogs are so good-natured that they laugh all the time. Dear me! I'm talking a great while, and am really getting very thirsty. Excuse me a moment."

The frog, who, you see, had very good manners, turned about, jumped down in the water, and after a moment scrambled back on the edge of the fountain again, his coat looking very much brighter and fresher for the bath he had taken.

"Our cousins, the toads, are very much indeed like my own family. They are a little larger, and not very fond of the water, but live in muddy places, and even in dark cellars.

They wear dull brown coats, and, instead of our elegant spots, have funny little humps all over their backs.

"Toads often live in gardens, and they do quite as much work in their way as the gardeners, in killing the bugs and snails. They are quite friendly, too; and I have heard of cousins of mine who were quite tame, and would come out to eat crumbs that people scattered for them. One cousin of mine is very much thought of by both his family and mine, because he is so very wise. I don't mean that he has studied books, but he has lived in the country, in a dark hole under the piazza of a large house, for a great many years. When the family have come out to sit on the piazza in the Summer evenings, my cousin comes out of his hole and sits on the stones at the bottom of the piazza steps, where he can hear everything that is said; and though he never is known to join in the conversations, he *listens*, and toads, as well as little boys and girls, can learn a great deal by listening when older people are talking. Toads often live to be fifteen years old."

"Jamie, Jamie, where are you?" called Nurse Mary just then.

"Good-night," said the frog, "I must be getting home myself, and I really am a little hoarse from having talked so long; but you'll never throw stones at a frog again, will you?

God made you and He made me, and He never meant that you and I should hurt one another."

"No," said Jamie, "I'll never throw a stone at a frog again. They are real nice when you know all about them."

# BABY COLLINS'S FAIRY STORY.

THE long shadows lay on the grass, quite shading the croquet ground from the sun's hot kisses. The croquet mallets and bright colored balls lay about on the grass, and seemed to say, "Oh, *do* please come and pick us up and play with us." The wind sang a little silvery tinkle on the bells on the stakes, and they seemed to say, "Oh, *do* please come and knock your balls against us." The goats, harnessed to the gay little cart, standing in the carriage road in front of the house, nodded their heads sleepily in the warm Summer air, and, waking up suddenly from a longer nod than usual, tossed their heads and rolled their eyes toward the small boy, in a very dirty white kilt, who sat curled up on the highest step leading down from the piazza, and seemed to say, "Oh, *do* please come and drive us."

A hoop and stick lay on the piazza; a bag of marbles, a hammer, saw, plenty of nails, and a plane were peeping out of a tool-box under the piazza; a kitten was rolling over and over on the grass, with a tangle of whipcord in her

paws; and a great black dog that had curled himself up on the steps at the little boy's feet was casting wistful glances at a rubber ball near him; and hammer and saw, nails, kitten, dog, and ball, all seemed to say, "Oh, *do* please come and play with us!" to the very cross-looking little boy, who only pulled his tangled hair, and scowled his dirty face into a more unpleasant expression than ever.

"I wish I had a velocipede," sighed Baby Collins.

Wheels came rattling around the house; the little goats trotted themselves out of the way just in time as the carriage, drawn by the two gay young horses, drew up in front of the door, where John, the coachman, could hardly coax them to stand still long enough to allow Aunt Emmie to get in; and then away they pranced and danced down the avenue, while John, sitting up very straight indeed in his handsome livery and tall hat, guided them carefully out of the gate and down the road.

"Oh dear, I wish I was a coachman," sighed Baby Collins, casting a disdainful glance at the frisky little goats.

Papa came briskly out of the open hall door just then, long boots on his feet and a fishing-rod over his shoulder, and Baby Collins's Uncle Bob was behind him, with a landing-net on one of *his* shoulders and a pair of oars over the other.

"Papa, papa, please let me go fishing with you," said the little boy, jumping up. "Let me go with you!"

"Not to-day, dear," papa answered, shaking his head; "we're going quite too far for such a small body; and think how lonely the nannie-goats would be if you left them."

"I hate nannie-goats!" growled Baby Collins; "and I wish I was a man, and then I could do just what I pleased. No; I wish I was a king, and then everybody'd have to do just what I said. Oh dear, I *do* wish this was the land where the fairies lived, and then I'd ask them to make me a king right straight off this minute."

Baby Collins's mother came out on the piazza just then, and sat down in the shadow of the wisteria vine, with her sewing. She took it all in in a minute—the cross little boy with his dirty face, the patient goats, wistful dog, and frolicking kitten; the toys and the croquet balls lying about, for she had heard what the cross little boy had been saying.

"Shall I tell you a story, baby," mamma's soft voice came to startle him out of his day dream.

And then, without waiting for the answer, which the little boy was quite too cross to give, his mother began:

"Many years ago, in Germany, a poor laborer's son called his sister and said to her, 'You don't know what I know.' 'Something very grand, I've no doubt,' the little girl

answered; for wasn't it strange, baby, those little children were *very* cross sometimes?"

Baby Collins wiggled and looked a little ashamed.

"'It *is* something very grand,' his mamma went on. 'And if you knew what it is you'd be ready to jump up to the ceiling for joy.'

"'Should I? Then tell me what it is,' coaxed the little boy's sister.

"'If I like I can be a king this very night.'

"How the little girl did laugh. 'You'd be a fine king in your torn jacket,' she said.

"'But I need not keep my torn jacket; I shall have a red mantle and a gold crown; and if you like you can be a princess and wear a beautiful dress, and when I sit on my gold throne you can sit next me on a silver throne. We shall have a golden castle, and eat the most delicious food every day, and never have to gather wood in the forest again.'

"'But how can all this happen?' asked his sister. 'Our father and mother are so very poor.'

"The boy looked wise and began—'I dreamt last night——'

"'Oh, a dream!' interrupted his cross little sister, and was running away, when her brother caught hold of her dress and said, in quite as cross a voice as hers had been:

"'Hear me out, you have not heard the best yet. What I told I only saw in a dream, but when I had seen the castle I felt somebody pull my ear. I woke up, the moon was shining, and I saw standing by the bed a little man with a long gray beard and a brown wrinkled face. He put his fingers on his mouth, for me not to make a noise. Then he asked me in a whisper if I liked the dream; and if I should like to be a king and live in a golden castle. When I nodded yes, he said—"If everything is to happen as you have dreamt it, come into the wood with your sister to-night, when the moon rises, and wait for me at the foot of the great fir-tree. But remember this one thing. When you are in the golden castle you must not wish one single time that you were any one else but a king and a princess, or let a single tear fall to the ground when you wish it, or your kingdom will vanish and we poor kobolds will be again without a king." Now, sister, you must promise me that you will not cry in the golden castle — you are always crying.'

"As his sister wished very much to be a princess, she promised not to cry, and they agreed to go into the wood together towards evening and wait for the moon to rise. But long before twilight came they crept away, for fear their father and mother would keep them at home when they came

back from work, for it was Saturday, and there was plenty to do in the house.

"The children went hand-in-hand to the great fir-tree, seated themselves on the soft moss, and waited for the moon to rise.

"In a little while the little girl said, 'I cannot help thinking about father and mother and wishing I could see them, and it makes me feel very sad. I should like to cry—may I cry now?'

"'Oh yes, you may cry now. We are not in the golden castle yet. Have a good cry while we are still in the forest.'

"So the little girl cried until she fell fast asleep, and her brother sat by her, thinking how nice it would be to be a king, till at length *he* grew tired and sleepy and began to nod.

"When the two children woke up they were surprised to find each other in the most splendid clothes. The boy had on black velvet small-clothes and a shining coat of blue silk. From his shoulders hung a red mantle embroidered with gold, and on his curly head was a gold crown. His sister's dress was of sky-blue silk, covered with silver stars.

"While they were looking at one another the little man with the gray beard stood before them, saying, 'Welcome! welcome! it was very good of you to come.' Then he blew

on a small silver horn he wore by his side, and a long procession of gray-bearded dwarfs appeared, carrying a gold and a silver litter resting on ebony staves under a magnificent canopy. The boy placed himself on the golden litter and his sister on the silver one.

"Slowly and solemnly the procession moved through the forest to a mountain, on which grew a majestic old fir-tree. At the foot of the mountain appeared a great cave, where many lights were burning.

"The dwarfs walked down a long passage to a vast hollow in the heart of the mountain, where it was as light as day. Here stood a golden castle, far more beautiful than that the little king had seen in his dream. The brother and sister descended from their litters, and, attended by the dwarfs, went up the crystal steps to the castle gate, which flew open. They entered a hall, in which stood two thrones—one of gold and one of silver.

"The boy seated himself on the gold throne, and the girl took the other. Hardly had they done so when a gentle approving whisper went around the room, and the little men passed before the thrones, bowing low, and saying, 'Long live King Kobold the First.'

"At this the king got up and said, 'My name is *not* Kobold; it is Fritz. Ask my sister, she knows.'

"The little girl nodded yes, but the dwarf who had come to meet the children in the forest said: 'May your gracious majesty pardon me, but from this day forward your majesty is king of all the dwarfs, kobolds and gnomes.'

"'If that is the reason,' said the king graciously, 'I will consent to it.'

"As he spoke, a kobold, bearing a staff in his hand, came near the throne and said that dinner was ready.

"'I am very glad to hear it,' said the king, 'for I am very hungry.'

"A golden door opened and showed a long table covered with everything you can possibly think of that children love. The king and his sister got down from their thrones and took seats at the head of the table, and all the dwarfs seated themselves around it.

"The children enjoyed their dinner very much. When it was over they were taken to a beautiful room, in which stood a gold and a silver bed. The king took the gold bed, and his sister the silver one.

"As they rested on the soft down, Fritz said, 'Sister, how do you like our golden castle? Nothing in the world can be more beautiful.'

"'Yes,' said the little girl, 'if only father and mother were here.'

"'I wish so too,' said her brother. 'I wonder what they are doing.'

"'Oh,' sighed the little girl, 'they will look for us, and when they do not find us, how they will cry!'

"'Yes; and when we do not come home they will think the wolf has eaten us, as he did little Red Riding-hood.'

"'Don't be angry with me,' whispered the little girl; 'I have let two tears fall on the bed, but not on the floor, and I did not wish. You are very quiet; are you crying too?'

"'Yes,' came a whispered answer from the golden bed. 'I thought I heard our father calling us, and his voice sounded so sad; but I did not wish, and I caught my tears in my hand.'

"For a little longer they both cried quietly in their beds, till at last the little girl sobbed out, 'Shall you *always* be a king, and shall we *never* go home again? I shall die, I know I shall, and then you'll be all alone in your golden castle.'

"'I thought it was nicer to be a king,' sighed her brother, 'and do just what you liked and have everything you wanted to. The golden crown has rubbed my forehead till it is quite sore. I would rather gather wood with you in the forest (and I'm sure I'd be contented *now*) than always sit on a throne; it's such dull work!'

"'I'll tell you what we'll do,' said the princess; 'we will

both wish, and let a tear fall on the floor, and then we can both run home together.'

"This was just what her brother wished; so each of them dropped a tear on the floor, when the castle began to rock so violently that the brother and sister sprang out of bed, began screaming, and then knew nothing more at all.

"The castle disappeared, the children lay on the cold ground, and the kobolds stood around them very sorrowful.

"'Did I not tell you,' said one of them—who must have been very old, for he had a long snow-white beard—'did I not tell you that we should lose our king this time as we have done so often before? Little children, no matter how discontented they are in the world, nor how much they want to have their own way, very soon get tired of all the beautiful things we can give them and of having their own way, and only wish they could see their fathers, mothers, and their own dear home again.'

"The dwarfs hung their heads in silence, for they had wished very much to have a king from the human race, and had tried a great many discontented children; but they had all wished themselves home very soon, just as these children had done. So they mournfully dressed the children in their own old clothes, carried them silently out of the mountain into the forest, and laid them on the soft moss under the fir-tree.

"When the children woke up it was broad day, the sun was shining brightly through the green boughs, and the birds were singing merrily. They were very much surprised to find themselves lying under the tree, but jumped up to run and meet their father and mother, whom they saw coming toward them, for they had been looking for their children the whole night. When the children had kissed their parents and told them how glad they were to see them again, they told them all that had happened during the night. Their father was sure they must have dreamt it all. 'For,' said he, 'there are no such creatures as dwarfs and kobolds.' The children did not say anything, but they looked at each other as much as to say, 'We know better, for we were with them in the golden castle.'

"Later in the day, when the children were again gathering dry wood in the forest, Fritz said, 'Do you remember how I wore a red mantle and a crown and sat on a throne?'

"His sister nodded, and answered, 'Of course I *must* remember it, for I sat next you on a silver throne, and had a blue dress, covered with silver stars.'

"'If we had not wished and let our tears fall on the floor, I should still have been a king and you a princess. But I'm not sorry,' he added, with a smile at his old mended jacket.

"'Neither am I,' answered his sister. 'Even if we are poor and have to work hard, it's a great deal nicer to try to be contented and stay with father and mother.'"

Very red grew Baby Collins's cheeks, very sober his face was, but a little hand had stolen down to stroke the dog's head, and a place was made for pussy on the crumpled kilt-skirt when she came mewing up the steps for sympathy and something to sleep on.

"There are little boys," mamma's soft voice went on, "who have twice, yes, three times as much as that little boy and girl had to make them happy; who never have to work, and have as many nice things to eat as little boys who are to grow up to be healthy men ought to have. Plenty of toys these little boys have, dogs and goats, pussies, fathers and mothers, who love them dearly. But doesn't it seem strange, baby, they are not at all happy; and are always wishing they had something else, or were grown up men or kings, and could do just as they wished to? If you ever meet any of these little boys, dear, will you tell them this story about the little German children?"

A queer little smile stole round one corner of Baby Collins's mouth, and a little dimple, that the frown had frightened away, crept back to its place again, as he looked up shyly at mamma through his long lashes.

"I guess, mamma," he said very softly, "I guess you've been telling the story to one of those little boys."

Mamma smiled, but did not say anything; and Baby Collins slipped down the steps to pat the nannie-goats and go for a little ride in the cart they were drawing, with the kitten and the big black dog frisking and galloping on each side, in front and all around him.

That night, when Baby Collins was all ready for bed, and his mother had come up to kiss him good-night and hear him say his prayers, after "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me," and "Our Father," she heard the little boy whisper, "Please, God, make me not want to be a king or anybody else, but just a good boy that minds his mother and 's contented, for Jesus' sake. N'amen."

And do you know, I am very sure that any little boy, or big boy either, who asks anything of the dear Lord, as Baby Collins did, humbly as a very little child, trusting and believing that God is listening, will be heard by Him, for His ears are *always* open to His little children's prayers, and in His own good time, if the children truly and earnestly try to do right themselves, He will grant their prayer, just as He did help Baby Collins to learn to be contented with all the good and pleasant things He had given him to enjoy.

"Make me not want to be a king."—Page 136.

# WHAT THE TEA-KETTLE TOLD TO HARRY.

HARRY was sitting in front of the nursery fire by the side of mamma, who was undressing the baby. It wasn't a very happy face this evening, so many things had gone wrong, and Harry was fretting a little, till mamma said, "Oh, Harry, I'm afraid you are not a very contented little boy!"

"But I would be contented, mamma, if I could only have one 'fing' I want; yes, I'm *sure* I would be."

"No, my dear, I'm very much afraid that when you had that one thing—it's a purse to keep your money in, isn't it?—something else to wish for would pop into that busy little mind, and you would wish just as much for that as you had for the purse. Try to be contented, dear. You have a great deal to make you happy now, though I know a new purse would be very nice."

Then mamma smiled down at the brown eyes gazing so thoughtfully into the fire, and carried baby-boy off into her own room to rock him asleep.

Harry sat still in Amy's little rocking-chair. The room

was full of shadows, for the gas had not been lighted, and the other children were downstairs in the study. It was very quiet, too, or would have been but for the tea-kettle which nurse had brought up a little while before, and it was boiling away at a great rate, singing what seemed to be a little song of its own; but as Harry listened, the song changed into words, and the kettle began to tell a story to the little boy sitting in the rocking-chair.

. . . . . .

Once upon a time, in the cold weather last Winter, the water in the kettle began to boil, and because no one was ready to use it, the kettle had been taken off from the coals, and put on the little iron shelf, just at one side over the fire; there it puffed and rattled its lid, sending out great clouds of beautiful white steam, till Amy, who was sitting on her mother's lap before the fire, being undressed, stretched out her fat hands to catch them.

Pussy sat winking and blinking in front of the grate, wondering—let me see—perhaps what the kettle, who was an old friend of hers, was doing upstairs in the nursery, when it usually lived in the kitchen, for how was a pussy cat to know that the water-pipes had burst? And too, perhaps, why the tea-kettle bubbled and sang, and the little girl laughed and talked, instead of just purring as she did.

"The steam would burn."—Page 139.

Amy is so little that she did not know any better than to keep on trying to reach the white steam, till mamma said: "No, dear, it's only pretty to look at; the steam would burn my little girl if she should touch it; and besides, what would you do if you were to touch the old black kettle? My! how dirty this nice, clean, white apron would be."

"Dear me," said the tea-kettle, trying to turn away, and looking as unpleasant and dignified as a black kettle with a very stiff handle could, "that's always the way, people put me on the coals, and when I am warm enough to begin singing—for the steam is only my song—they tell all the children not to touch me, as if I had no personal feelings at all, and could not feel hurt. If I had a silver handle, now, or was all silver, like the hot-water kettle that always goes to the tea-table and stands on the side-board the rest of the day, I should be more politely treated." So the kettle grumbled and sulked until mamma poured all its warm water into Amy's bath-tub, and then it had to be quiet, though looking just as disagreeable and cross as ever.

That night, after every one was in bed and fast asleep, the kettle still sat on the iron shelf; and not being at all sleepy, in a strange place, looked about, at the bright-colored tiles on the sides and over the fireplace; at the moonlight that lay in a broad white path across the pretty carpet; at the

bellows that hung on the wall close by; at the children's clothes on the chairs, and their playthings on the floor. "Well," said the kettle, when it had finished looking around, "it's always the way; nurse has forgotten me, and here am I left to spend the night as best I may in this cold room, when down in the kitchen it would at least be warm, and there's always the crickets to keep one company. If I was silver I would be locked away in the side-board, with all the spoons and the rest of the genteel silver to keep me company."

Just as it had finished its grumble, the kettle was very much surprised to hear a queer sound from the wall on the other side of the fireplace, and to see the bellows' broad square mouth opening and shutting as it was trying to get wind enough in its body to speak with. At last it said, in a queer, gasping voice:

"Oh, yes, it is all very well for you to complain; but what if you were me, and had to use every bit of your breath to blow the fire, and had none left to sing with; wouldn't you think it was pretty hard? Now if I could only be the sugar-tongs, live on white lump sugar, and always come to the table, *I* should be contented."

Before the kettle could say a word, it was so surprised, Amy's doll, that had been lying flat on the floor all the even-

ing, with one arm out stiff as if it were making a speech, rose up in a very stiff, straight way, as if it had only one joint in its spine, and joined in the conversation.

"What do you both think of the life I lead, and how would you enjoy lying on the floor and under the tables or chairs, when you ought to have been put in your own bed hours before? How would you like to be carried upside down till every bit of sawdust in your body ran into your brains, or by your arm, if you had any, till it was just held on by one stitch? Would you like to be fed on gingerbread and milk by the children, when you cannot swallow them at all because they do not agree with your constitution? *I* should like to be the bronze Mercury that stands on the pedestal in the parlor. The children would have to let me alone then; they could not even touch me."

While the kettle and the bellows were looking at the doll, and listening to her mournful story, the wooden elephant and Mrs. Noah, who lived in the large wooden ark that Harry's grandfather had given him on Christmas, sat up to say a word on their own account.

"What is life to us who are crowded, when we are at home, into such a small wooden building with so many others that we ache in every joint? As for me," the elephant went on, "I have been, on account of my size, so crushed and

squeezed in being put in and taken out of the door in the roof of the ark that part of my trunk is missing and half of one of my legs. And look at Mrs. Noah's dress; see how the color, such a pretty blue as it was when it was new, has been crowded and handled till you can only see what it used to be in the creases around her neck." The elephant did all the talking, as Mrs. Noah was shy and hadn't much to say for herself; only the tea-kettle heard her whisper that she should like to be the beautiful dancing-doll, with the very full skirts, who always stood, or rather hung, on the mantel-piece when she was not dancing. But the elephant declared that for *his* part he should prefer to be a little green rock-ing-chair, like the one of Amy's that stood always in the nursery. It would be so nïce to be able to move back and forth, instead of standing stiff and straight in one place, just wherever you were put.

"Do you think you would be contented then?" said a voice behind them, and the gray cat came up to join the party. She sat down and began to wash her face. As she washed it and rubbed her paw over her face, the whiskers disappeared, the green eyes grew round, a soft, gray dress took the place of fur, and a queer little woman, with a funny, wide mouth, a broad nose, and a good deal of a cat look about her face still, crossed her paws—no, her arms—in front

of her, and said again, "Would you be contented? because if you would be, I can grant your wish."

For you see, children, the cat was a fairy, who, for the sake of peace and quietness, and because she did not like to attract attention in these days when there are so few fairies in the world, took the shape and ways, in the day-time, of our own dear gray pussy, and only washed herself into a fairy, and a funny looking one, too, on moonlight nights.

When everybody was quite over with their surprise, the kettle said, "Yes, indeed, *I* should be quite contented, I am sure."

"And so would I," "and I," "and I," said all the others.

"Well, then," said the fairy, slowly, "I will grant each one his or her wish; though if you took my advice, you would all stay just what you are now. For one year each can be just what they would like best to be. A year from to-night we will all meet here again, and every one must be ready to tell me if they are perfectly contented; if not, I shall change you back again into what you are now. So be careful."

When she had finished speaking, pussy—no, I mean the fairy who had been pussy—tapped the doll, the elephant, and Mrs. Noah, and then jumped up in the chair to reach the bellows, and on the fender to the kettle. In a very few moments

the elephant rocked into a rocking-chair, Mrs. Noah was looking very much surprised at her beautiful gold-trimmed skirts, while the Mercury doll was balanced on one foot in the parlor, and a very bright silver kettle was locked away in the safe.

For a whole year pussy walked about the house and garden, slept in the sunshine, and purred in front of the fire as if she hadn't a single secret on her mind, till when another moonlight had come, when the world and all the people in it were a whole year older, a very funny looking company met on the rug in front of the nursery fire again. The silver kettle, the sugar-tongs, and Mrs. Mercury had hopped and bounced upstairs, the rocking-chair rocked itself in from the pile of broken toys in the "calamity" room, and Mrs. Noah had danced herself down beside them.

"Good-evening," said Mrs. Puss, coming into the room; "it seems to me nobody looks quite so happy as I should like to have them. Every one has had what they most wished for; why shouldn't they be contented? Come, Mrs. Kettle, you begin. Why do you look so sorrowful?"

"Ah," said the kettle, looking round, "is it really and truly only a year since we had our last meeting? why, it seems to me like a hundred years since I was locked away with that stupid company of forks and spoons, who can only talk about how long they have been in the family. Couldn't

you rub them up a little—give them a few ideas? for really it is a very dull life to lead; then, too, I should like to have a few more ornaments; I am quite plain, the spoon-holder says."

"I see, I see," said the fairy, "you are not contented yet." And with one pat of her paw, a black kettle was singing on the kitchen-range again, who, after she had been welcomed back by some very loud chirps from her friend the cricket, drew a very long sigh, and began to sing, saying,

"After all, it's a great deal nicer to be just what one was made to be; because no matter what one is, there is always something else to wish for, and how comfortable and pleasant it is here! The cricket was *very* glad to see me."

It was just the same with every one else: the sugar-tongs had dyspepsia from living on sweet things always, which was much worse, he thought, than loss of breath, and he was very anxious for a change of diet. Mrs. Mercury's foot ached so badly, she wanted to be allowed to put the other one down in its place; besides, she was very lonely for the children. The dancing Mrs. Noah was tired and dizzy, and anxious to know if she could visit her family, who didn't recognize her at all in her new dress; besides, Amy's new dancing doll had wings, and Mrs. Noah felt quite old-fashioned without

them. As for the rocking-chair, his arm had been broken off that dreadful day when Amy tipped over, and he thought it nothing more than to claim his rights to ask for a new one; but he had made up *his* mind it would be much pleasanter only to be an *arm-chair*, then one could stand still sometimes at least; as it was, rocking so much had given him the "creaks" very badly.

The fairy shook her head very seriously at them all. "Do you see? Nobody is quite contented. Everybody wants something more, though their great wish was granted a year ago. Go back to what you were last year. Try hard to be contented; I'm sure every one has had a good lesson."

So everybody went back to their old shape again; and, after all, the old ways were very pleasant to contented minds.

. . . . . .

The tea-kettle had just finished telling Harry this story when nurse opened the door with a lighted taper in her hand, and then, touching the gas with it, how fast the shadows flew into the corners and the dark places under the beds! Harry was still looking at the kettle, wondering if it would speak again, when nurse said, "Bless the boy; he's been asleep here all alone in the dark."

But he hadn't, you know.

The very next day the children's auntie came to see

them, and when her trunk had been opened, and some delicious candy given to everybody, and auntie had found a chime of little silvery bells for the baby, a whole new suit for Amy's doll, and such a splendid jack-knife for Willy, she turned around to look at Harry, who was kneeling beside the trunk looking on, and said, "Harry, what do you want most?" And Harry answered:

"I want two fings: a purse and a cane; but I 'spose I'm just as well off without them, because if I had those two fings, I should want two fings more, so I 'spose I'm just as happy," with a long sigh.

After mamma had said "I'm glad my little boy is learning to be contented; he will be so much happier," he looked up in her face and said, with a very grave face,

"*You* told me that, mamma," and then a little lower, "and the tea-kettle did too."

# SOME ROBINSON CRUSOES.

THE children were looking out of the window when papa came home to dinner. Coming up the drive, he saw them and took off his hat, and made such a very polite bow to them that Belle was sure right away he had something nice for them, or something very delightful to tell. But when they had rushed downstairs, he was only hanging up his hat and talking to mamma; and, all but the laugh in his eyes, he looked *so* surprised when the children asked him what it was.

"Mamma," he said, "what do you have such fat, silly lambs for, running around the house, asking questions? Don't you know it is very dangerous when I am so hungry? Why, I *may* have a knife and fork in my pocket, besides mustard and pepper to season them with, and I shall catch and eat the very next one who asks me a question if dinner isn't ready!"

Then seeing Belle opening her mouth to ask another question, he gave a great jump at her, and chased her into the dining-room, lifted her into her chair, and pretended to

take a great bite out of her cheek; but it was *really* only a kiss, you know.

All through dinner papa and mamma were so busily talking, and about something, too, that the children understood so little, that they had made up their minds papa had nothing to tell them after all, and were slipping out of their chairs (mamma had excused them, while the after-dinner coffee was being poured), when papa said, "Oh, by the way," in such a brisk voice that they both stopped to listen, "I wonder if anybody in this room would like to go to Whitcombe with me on Thursday?"

Whitcombe! Belle gave a leap in the air, and then ran to give her father a great hug, while Paul danced around the room on one foot, for Whitcombe meant Grandma Langley's, the sea shore, surf-bathing, hard sand to build forts and dig wells in, crabs, shells, sea-weed, and all the good times that could possibly be crowded into the three Summer months. Of course papa *knew* he would have plenty of company, for hadn't they been thinking and talking about that visit long before the snow began to melt?

The children had only two days to wait before the morning came, when they took a half-day's journey over the long, salt meadows, and then an hour's ride, partly on the shore by the side of the racing waves, and the rest of the way

climbing the sand-hills that hid the long, low stone house where grandma and all the dogs were waiting for them on the piazza.

Besides the splendid times they always had at Whitcombe, the children had a plan of how they would spend their Summer that no one but themselves knew about.

On Paul's birthday in the Winter, grandma had sent him "Robinson Crusoe," and how many times he had read that book through I shouldn't like to be asked. Belle, between the care of her large family of dolls and going to school, had very little time for reading herself; but it didn't matter, because Paul talked about his book every night after the gas was out and mamma had tucked up and kissed her children, each in their own little white bed, before going downstairs; he had told her all about the life on that lonely island in the long Winter evenings when mamma had thought them both sound asleep.

And they were sure that Robinson Crusoe's island was, of course, the only one they had ever seen or heard of—an island that lay half a mile beyond the mouth of the great salt bay made by the sea and the tides that separated Whitcombe House from the village three miles away. This island was a small one, and of it only a few large rocks were above water at high tide, though the children believed all

the wonderful things Paul had read about must grow and live there; that nothing in the world could possibly be nicer than to live in such a place long enough to grow useful, wise, and contented, as Robinson Crusoe had done. So they had quite made up their minds to be shipwrecked on the island that Summer. Of course Paul couldn't go without his sister, and when they had been there a good many years, they would be taken off by some passing vessel, and surprise every one by coming home again.

Mamma knew nothing at all about this plan, because she had said once she was very sure Robinson Crusoe would say, if he were alive now, that it wasn't nearly so nice as living in a comfortable home with his father and mother. Then the children had decided there was *one* thing mamma did not know quite so well about as they themselves, and that she might possibly think they hadn't better go if they told her. But they ought to have done so.

The first few days at Whitcombe there was so much to do, going in bathing and building larger forts than ever, that the children nearly forgot their plan, but not quite; and the first morning when crab hunting was not quite so exciting as usual, they hurried to carry it out, when grandma and mamma had driven to the village.

An old boat that was used for duck-shooting was drawn

up on the shore of the bay, and into it Belle got, while Paul pushed it off from the sand and jumped in after her. There were no oars; but if, as Paul said, they were going to be shipwrecked, they didn't need them. In the boat with them the children had brought a box (Robinson Crusoe had a chest, you know), and in it were all sorts of things: the tack-hammer, and all the large nails they could find; the dolls' dishes, and three of their grandmother's gold egg-spoons; a gimlet, plenty of twine; the lemon-squeezer, and nearly a pound of chocolate drops. Besides all these treasures, there were ever so many apples, and their lunch of gingerbread and little crackers rolled in a silk quilt. These things were only to last them for a little while, till he explored the island, Paul said. No one had seen them leave the house, they ran in and out so many times a day, and no one saw them now as the boat drifted out to sea with the swift running tide.

"We'll be at the island soon," said Paul; but though he tried to be very cheerful, somehow he couldn't feel so when the boat rocked, or a wave dashed its spray quite over them.

"It isn't nice a bit, and kitty don't think so, either," said Belle; for the gray kitten had come down to the shore with them, and Paul let Belle take her in the boat, "because," he said, "when she had been on the island a long while,

and got wild, if we make believe a great deal, she'll be a goat."

Their angel's fingers—for I am sure God must have sent one to watch over that old boat, tossing on the waves without oars or rudder—guided it into a quiet pool between two rocks, and the next wave pushed it up on the island. The children scrambled out and looked about them. It did not take long to walk around the island and back to the boat again, and though there was plenty of seaweed and bits of driftwood left on the sand by the tide, that was all. There were no palm or date trees, no wonderful sugar-cane or potatoes growing wild, though they hunted everywhere for them, and the children could only think that the savages must have come and dug them every one up after Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday went to England.

The boat drifted off again with the afternoon tide, but Paul had taken all their provisions and the box out, fortunately. Still it made the two just a little homesick when the tide drove them up on the rocks to find a dry seat, and they watched their ship drifting up the bay. Trying to build a house of driftwood was very discouraging work, Paul found, because none of the pieces were very large, and the tack-hammer would not drive in the large nails, no matter how hard he pounded; there were no caves in the rocks either,

and pussy found her part in the island life so disagreeable that she did nothing but wander about, mewing in a very sad voice, till at last the poor discouraged little Robinson Crusoe sat down to think it all over. It was almost sunset by that time, the tide had turned again, but a cold wind from the ocean was doing its best to drive the waves back. A bank of heavy clouds was rising out of the west, and all the birds who lived in the salt marshes were flying home. Very early in the afternoon the children's hats had run off with a gay little breeze, and there was nothing at all on the island with fur on it but pussy, to make some more out of. At home, Paul thought, it was almost supper-time. Mamma and grandma were home again, and perhaps mamma was standing by the window that looked down the shore watching for them, and they weren't coming home; they never could come any more until a ship came to take them off, or the savages found them; and it wasn't very pleasant to think about *them*, while it was growing dark so fast.

"Paul," said his little sister just then, "I—I don't like very much to be Mrs. Crusoe. There's nowhere to sleep and nothing good to eat, and perhaps mamma's looking for us now."

The big blue eyes were full of tears as Belle looked wistfully toward the shore.

"You mustn't say that."—Page 155.

"Yes, perhaps she is, but she can't find us; and, Belle, do you know I guess mamma knows best—she always does know best—and you know she said it wouldn't be so nice as living at home; and we shall be here so many years that perhaps she'll die, and then I can't tell her how sorry I am that we didn't mind her."

"Don't, Paul, don't! you mustn't say that. Don't you know it might remind the Lord to come and get her, and I don't want her to go away and leave us!"

"Let's say our prayers and go to bed, though there's nothing but sand for that; if we ask the Lord very hard perhaps He'll let us go home sooner than He did Robinson Crusoe; and I'm so cold, and it's so dark!" Paul cried so hard that Belle had to wipe her eyes and hug him ever so long and so hard before she could comfort him. Then they rolled themselves up in the silk quilt and went to sleep, with kitty beside them, and so forgot all their troubles.

. . . . . .

In Boston, just after dark that night, a telegraph boy was running through the rain with a yellow envelope in his book for the children's papa; and when he had torn it open and read the message he hardly waited to put on his overcoat and shut the front door after him before he hurried down the street to the railroad station to catch the last train

for Whitcombe. Oh, what a terrible journey it was for him! And how the fast train seemed to him to be only crawling along through the wind and the rain, for the message had said, "The children are missing!"

All night long torches were being carried up and down the shore, held down into every cave made in the sand-hills by the wind, or held over the rocks that hung over the black, restless water; torches were going up and down the road leading to the village, and wandered over the salt marshes and sand-hills; boats were on the bay with more torches, the men that held them gazing anxiously into the bushes on the shore, and down into the water they were dragging, while the poor mother could only wander up and down in the rain, calling the children.

When morning came, the rain had stopped, but the clouds were dark and heavy, and a cold wind was blowing; the fishermen, and the men from the village, who had been looking for the children all night, were beginning to shake their heads and say, "They'll come in with the tide, it's no use looking any longer;" for they felt sure that the poor little boy and his sister must have been drowned, and were drawing up their boats on the sand, or watching dark specks on the plunging waves, as they were hurrying toward them. Even the children's father, who had been out on the water

ever since he reached Whitcombe, had come on shore at last, and was watching the water. Their mother came down to stand beside him, but very soon she began to walk up and down again, as she had been doing all night.

"Have you been on the island?" she said, pretty soon, shading her eyes with her hand to look off toward it.

"No, I don't think any one has thought of that or been there. How could the dear children possibly get out there?"

"Jim Leeds found the old-duck boat a drifting in the bay, last night, he said. They *might* have, come to think of it, got in that, and sorter drifted that way; but there aint one chance, not one chance in a thousand. They'll be washed in on the next tide!" said the old fisherman, who was standing by Mr. Hayden.

But the children's mother had not heard the last part of what he had been saying, for she was running down to the water and was calling papa to come with her to the island. She was the first to jump on shore when the boat touched the sand, and the first to find, lying beside a rock, half in a pool of water, the bundle rolled in the rain-soaked quilt that was the two sleeping children, with the little gray kitten, asleep, too, close by Belle's shoulder. The kitten was the first to wake and to show how glad she was to see them all by rubbing herself against first one and then another.

When the children were safe on land again, had been shown to every one to make sure that they were really alive; had been warmed, fed, bathed, and put to bed again; Paul told his mother all about their adventures, while she sat beside them. When he had finished, he said:

"And the very last thing I thought of, after we had said our prayers, was that the Lord knows best, and so does mamma, for He didn't mean us to be Robinson Crusoes, or there would have been things for us to eat on the island; and you said it wouldn't be nice, and it wasn't one bit. We've been talking about it with papa when you and grandma were downstairs getting the jelly, and we're never going to do anything again, if we can only remember, till after we've asked the Lord, you, and papa."

# "TIMMY."

IT was such a wee face: drawn with pain, and fever-burned, with a restless yellow head that tossed from side to side in a vain search for a cool spot on the hard pillow!

A low, bare room; cheerless and cold enough in the easterly storm that was raging. Close to the one window a woman was bending over her sewing. A few chairs, a table, a broken stove, fireless, and the fast deepening shadows to fill up the corners, were all the little one's heavy eyes found to rest on when they opened.

Out-of-doors the rain was beating down, dashing with hasty tapping fingers against the closed doors and windows; hurrying down the gutters in noisy, tumbling rivers, and sweeping the pavements clear of all but a few hurrying men, the dripping newsboys, and now and then a scurrying dog.

Such a pitiless wind was blowing, too! It roared and danced, whirled umbrellas about, and blew away hats without the slightest regard for the people's feelings. As every dash

came louder and harder against the window, the little sick boy opened his eyes and moaned:

"Where's my Timmy? Oh, why don't my Timmy come home?"

"Hush, dear, there's a darling; Timmy'll come home just as soon as he can. Maybe he'll bring that red rose. Yes," seeing the brightening look in the heavy eyes, "just as like as not he's bringing it now. Lie still, that's a dear, till mother finishes this shirt; the daylight's almost gone."

So the little boy tried hard to lie still, and could only moan and toss about until even his fever-dulled ear caught the sound of a quick, careful step on the creaking stairs. The door opened, and with a glad cry the little sick boy threw his arms around the neck of a larger boy, who had stolen cautiously into the room.

"Oh, my Timmy!" was all he said, while the hot head nestled close to his brother's wet jacket, and a faint smile stole over the tiny pinched face.

The big boy said nothing at all, but his face was working as he smoothed the tangled hair with his rough, grimy fingers.

"He's a lot better, aint he, mother?" Tim said at last, as he tried to look hopefully at his mother, when the little one had dropped off into one of his brief sleeps.

"No, Tim, he aint no better," his mother said mournfully, putting down her work to rock backward and forward violently a moment. "No; and he'll never be any better again in this world. He's goin' to a better, and I wish you and me were good enough to go along."

The big slow tears gathered in Tim's eyes and slipped down on the yellow head over which he was bending, when, with a start, the little sick boy woke up and began his old moan of "I want my Timmy! Where's my Timmy?"

"Here I am," Tim answered, pressing the little head closer to him. "You've forgot I just come in. Waked up kinder sudden-like, didn't you, dear?"

"Did you bring my wose, Timmy?" he moaned; "my beautiful wed wose? Mother said you'd bring me one."

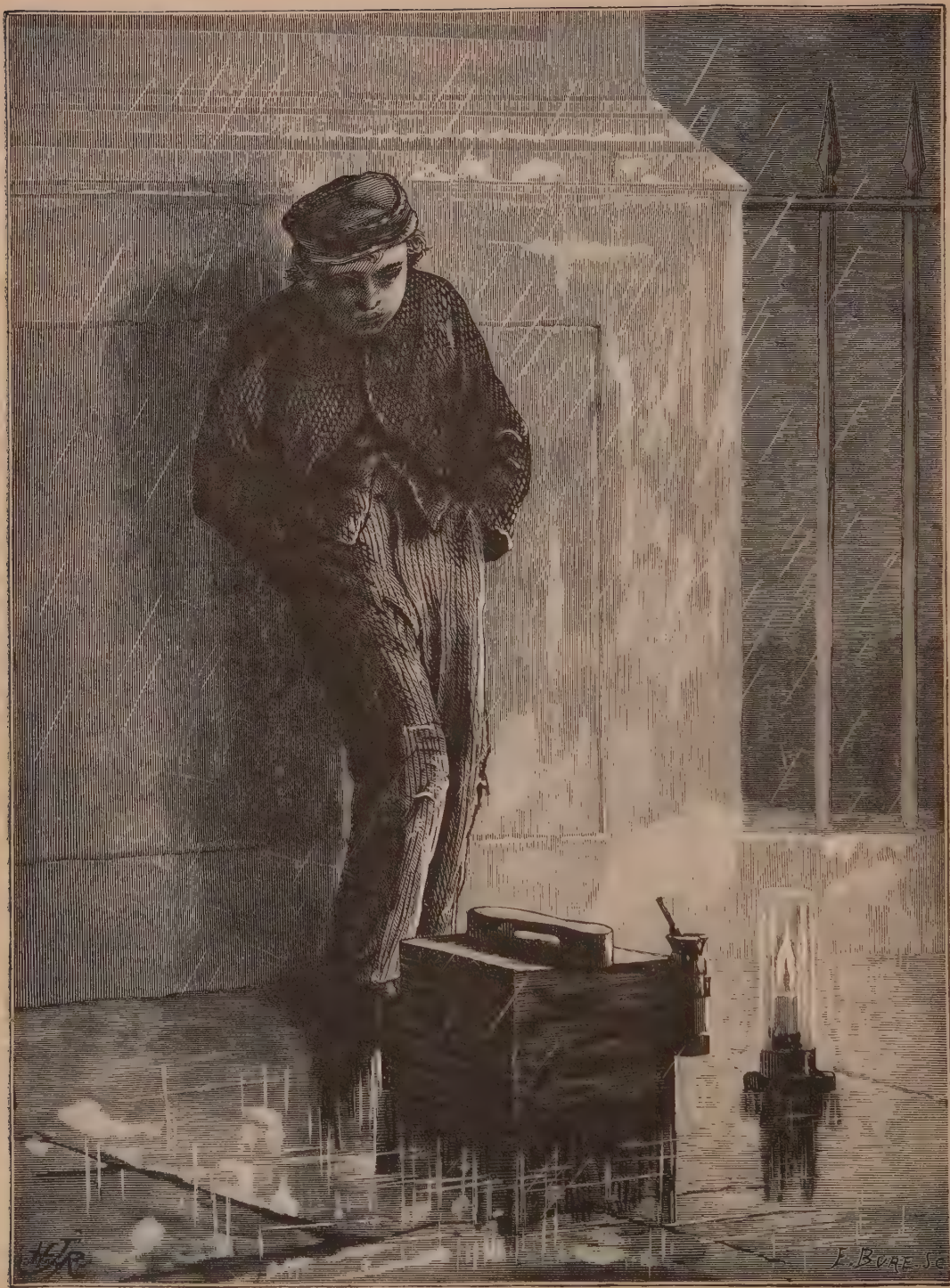
"No, dear, I didn't," answered Tim gently. "It's a very bad day for roses," he went on, looking down in the eager, hopeful little face. "You see, roses, big red roses, don't blossom when the wind and the rain blows like as it does now, except in the glass-houses, where rich people keep their flowers. Before very long it'll be Summer, and then Timmy'll carry you up to the Park. We'll have a jolly ride in the horse-cars all the way, and you'll look out of the winder and think you're drivin' the horses; and *there* you'll see all kinds of flowers—lilacs and roses, pink roses and red roses,

and lots and lots of climbing vines all over blossoms. And, like as not, little 'un, if I've had an extra day, a real tip-topper, *you'll* have a ride in the goat kerrige, big as anybody, sittin' up straight, sayin' 'Go 'long,' just like the little boys we see last Summer."

A wan little smile came over the sick boy's face as he listened to this pleasant prospect; but it faded, and soon he began to toss about again and say, "I want a wed wose! I *do* want to smell a wed wose, Timmy. I'm so hot! so hot!" till Tim could not listen any longer, and, unclasping the hot hands from his neck, hurried downstairs and out into the fast darkening street.

Without thinking what he was doing, Tim had taken up his box as he left the house, and when he reached his usual stand—the base of a great monument in the middle of a square, across which two busy streets ran—he put it down in front of him, the brushes and blacking-box in their places, and leaning against the cold gray stone tried to think it all out.

Tim belongs to the shoeblack brigade, and in pleasant weather his stand is a very profitable one. The five cents skip in very rapidly on bright mornings, and Tim's sharp eyes never let a chance of business escape him; but in such rainy weather no one was anxious or willing to have his boots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blacked, as Tim well knew, and he had been wandering about all day in search of horses to hold, or anything in the way of work that would bring him a few pennies.

All the money that Tim and his mother could earn, even the little nest-egg they were beginning to lay up for the next Winter, had been used in the little brother's sickness, and no matter how diligently he fumbled in his ragged pockets, not one stray penny rewarded his search.

"How *shall* I get the little un a rose?" he said to himself; "a real stunner of a rose that has lots of smell in it. He's *got* to have it!"

The rain beat against him; the wind fluttered his ragged clothes and tried to run off with his battered hat; a grinning newsboy shouted "Shine!" into his unheeding ears; and it was quite dark before Tim had made up his mind what to do, and came back to the world with a start and a shiver to find his beat quite deserted and the gaslights flaring on the wet pavement.

"The little un's got to have his rose anyhow," he said again, out loud this time, and then, picking up his much-abused box, Tim hurried across the street, and plodded up one and down another, until after a long walk he found himself in front of the flaring lights of a market. Around a hot coffee-stand ever so many bootblacks and newsboys

were gathered. Tim knew very well where to find his friends on such a rainy evening. It was not quite theatre time, and the boys were reinforcing themselves with coffee and rolls against the evening's pleasures.

When Tim opened the door he was greeted with, "Here's Tim!" "Tim, have some coffee? I'll treat." "Where's Tim been blacking shoes *to-night?*"

But Tim had no time to spare, now that he had made up his mind what to do. He said:

"Boys, I want to sell my kit. Here's two brushes, a hull box of blacking, a good stout box, and the outfit goes for two shillin's!"

"Goin' away, Tim?" asked one boy.

"No, not exactly, boys; but I want a quarter the worst kind just now."

"Goin' on a 'scursion termorrer?" asked another.

"Got short of peanuts and *must* have some more? I'll lend you ten cents," added a third.

"Wants some ice cream, I guess," proposed a fourth.

"No, I aint after none of them things, boys; but I *must* have a quarter," Tim answered.

One of the boys hunted twenty-five cents out of his ragged pocket, and took Tim's box, who looked a little wistfully at it, muttering, "I don't know what we'll do termorrer!"

and then turning around, hurried out of the market without another word.

"Somethin's the matter with Tim," the boys agreed among themselves, and one of their number decided to follow him to see what *was* the matter, and departed, whooping, cat-calling, running under horses' heads, and dodging policemen as only a bootblack knows how.

Tim made his way back through the same streets, past the monument, and up into the broad, brilliantly-lighted streets, where windows were filled with beautiful things, and handsome carriages picked their way among the omnibuses and horse-cars.

He stopped at last in front of a flower-store and looked cautiously in between the bouquets displayed in the window. There was no one in the store but the man behind the counter looking over flowers; and as Tim watched him, he with a few twists of his skilful fingers put a few fresh geranium leaves around two beautiful deep red roses.

Tim opened the door and stole in. The man only raised his eyes long enough to shake his head at him, and then went on with his work.

"How much for *them?*" Tim inquired, coming up to the counter and pointing at the red roses.

"Twenty-five cents; rather beyond you, I guess, my boy," the man answered carelessly.

"I'll take 'em," Tim said briefly, laying down his money.

There was something in the boy's sad face that prevented the man from joking about his queer purchase as he covered the roses carefully with paper and gave them to Tim.

Another sharp pair of eyes were looking in the window, wondering more than the flower-man did what Tim was going to do with his flowers, and a very active pair of legs that carried the sharp eyes around had a hard race to keep up with Tim as he dashed along with his precious bundle.

When Tim opened his room door the little yellow head was lying very quietly on its hard pillow, and the heavy eyes did not open until Tim, kneeling down on the floor beside him, said softly:

"See, little un, see what I've brought you. Here's your roses."

The little arms were a long time in groping their way to their old place around Tim's neck, and the little voice was very faint and hoarse that answered,

"Hold 'em up so I can smell 'em, Timmy, my Timmy that's so good to me!" So Tim held the heavy head on one arm and the roses to the little hot face with the other hand, while Teddy's eyes travelled from his brother's face to the roses and back again.

"What makes you cry, Timmy?" he said presently;

"where I'm a-goin' they have all the wed woses a little un can pick. That's what mother says. I'll save some for you and mother, Timmy, like these," and the little boy tried to rub his white cheek against the smooth rose petals.

"I've got my woses," he said again; "and Timmy, I *do* love you!"

After that there was a long silence; and when, in the early gray of the morning, Tim laid the little yellow head carefully back on the pillow, and stood looking down at what was left of his "little un," he whispered to his mother: "I guess the Lord lets such as him go right in among the roses; don't you, mother?"

When Tim, his eyes so full of tears that he could hardly see where he was going, opened the door a good while after, he stumbled over his own box, while a bouquet of flowers rolled off from the box on the floor. Fastened to the flowers was a bit of paper, on which was printed in very straggling letters, "Fur the litul un," and Tim knew from the sound of clattering feet that went hurrying down the stairs that some of his friends, the boys, had been watching over their present perhaps almost all the long hours of the night.

It was a queer bunch of roses that the bootblacks brought for little Ted; very full in bloom they were, battered, half wilted, and fading, for they had lain ever since early

morning in the hot breath of the market; but as they nestled among the yellow curls, and with the beautiful red roses were clasped so tightly in the little one's thin fingers, somehow Tim could not for the life of him have told why they seemed to comfort him so much.

"Like as if, you know, mother," he said tearfully, "the little un had so many roses now he could leave such a lot behind him. Can't you 'most see him a-standin', with them curls blowin' back, holding up both hands full of flowers, and a-callin', 'Timmy! I want my Timmy to see!' Oh, little un, little un, what made the road to heaven so short for you and so long for me? But I'm a-going to try, you just remember, and some day you'll come a runnin' to meet me, and I'll see the flowers you've told so much about."

. . . . . .

That was long ago, and everybody but Tim and his mother have almost forgotten the little boy who loved red roses. Almost, but not quite, for only the other morning I was sitting in the public gardens watching the busy, chattering sparrows, when I overheard a queer conversation. Some little ragged bootblacks were sunning themselves on the other end of the bench, counting their morning's harvest of pennies and chattering quite as briskly as the sparrows, till at last one said:

"But when it comes to bein' real good; the goin' to Sunday-school and keepin' straight along all the week kind; lookin' after the *little* fellers and seein' that nobody don't steal their brushes and punch their heads; yes, 'n standin' treats to the little fellers on rainy days; never sayin' a bad word before them, and keepin' 'em under his eye all the time, that's Tim, and I guess the reason is—don't you remember?—the little un."

Yes, they all remembered, and thought so too; and *I* thought, as I listened, of the blessed, beautiful promise that the dear Lord has made to those who are gentle and loving with little children, and that if Tim always remembers, and tries hard to be good, patient, and tender in this world, that in the world to come, somewhere very near the threshold, he will find his little one waiting for him, when his work on earth is done.

# SOME TIP-OVERS.

"FATHER says, if it's pleasant this afternoon, I can take old Cream, after school, and give Annie and Fanny, you and Lily, a sleigh-ride; and I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll go up in Boyington's Lane—there are always plenty of drifts there—and tip over. We haven't had any this Winter."

Amy Huntingdon was quite out of breath by this time, between running so far to catch up with Annie Edwards and talking so fast, so she had to stop and fan her breath back again with her spelling-book.

"Oh, Amy, that'll be perfectly splendid! If there's anything I have wanted to do ever since the snow came, it is to tip over; and old Cream is so lovely about standing still."

"Father's just as good; he said first that he *had* been thinking about driving over to Milford, to see Uncle John; but he guessed some other day besides Wednesday would do just as well."

"Amy, listen! There's the gong! They're locking the

doors, and we'll be locked out just as sure as can be, if we don't run."

For the doors of the Andover high-school were always locked precisely at five minutes before nine, and woe betide the unfortunate boy or girl who found themselves on the wrong side of the door after that. Five marks of the very blackest, longest kind were put against the name of the tardy one in the record for the week. No matter how perfect the lessons were, there it stayed; and Amy knew by experience just how it sounded to have read before all the school, on Monday morning after prayers, "Amelia Huntingdon, tardy once; marks, 4.5;" so the ground fairly flew under her feet as she ran along.

"There's Michael locking our door," panted Annie, behind her. But Michael was very good-natured; he saw the flying figures, and it took him a good while to bolt one half of the great door at the top and bottom; so long that the two little girls had time to rush through the open half, tear off their cloaks and hats, and, breathless, panting, and very red in the face, slip into their seats just as the great hall clock struck nine.

Miss Smith looked very grave, and for some reason, Amy could not think why, she was looking straight at her. Amy wiggled, put her hands and arms in position, sat up

very straight, felt of the velvet on top of her head and her hair, to be sure that they were in order, and they were; her ruffle was a clean one, and she felt sure about her hands. What *could* Miss Smith be looking at?

The girls began to turn around then, wondering what was the matter that the bell for chapel did not strike; and just then Amy's eyes fell on her desk. Such a disorderly desk as No. 18, senior, B row, that morning, was very rarely seen in Miss Smith's room, or any other school-room, I hope. A battered slate, a blotted copy-book, and three or four abused-looking books, to say nothing of a ruler, a sponge, and several slate-pencils, were piled one on top of another on the desk; and that there might be no possible mistake as to *whose* desk it was, the tip-toppest book of all had fallen open at the fly-leaf, and there, written in very round plain letters, in Amy's own writing,

"AMELIA BROOKS HUNTINGDON.
"Steal not this book, for fear of shame;
For here you see the owner's name."

Wasn't it dreadful?

Amy remembered then that she had pulled them all out just before leaving the school-room the afternoon before, when she was looking for her Latin grammar. Of course she had meant to put them up. Amy always *meant* to do things,

but she had what the girls called "the very largest forgettery," and here her books were.

"Your desk is such an ornament to the school-room, Amy, you may leave it just as it is all day," was all Miss Smith *said;* but Amy wouldn't have minded a good scolding half so much.

That was only the beginning. The very Latin grammar that had so upset her desk was lying quietly on the hall table at home, where she had put it the night before to remember, and then had marched off without it, so that lesson was a failure then. Wednesday afternoon, in the high-school, is always devoted to the reading of compositions and reciting of poetry in the chapel. Amy of course had forgotten all about its being her week to recite, until Miss Smith mentioned the fact just before recess. There was no help for it, the whole of that precious twenty minutes had to be spent in walking up and down the deserted school-room, gabbling over to herself her part in the vision of Sir Lanford.

"Amy Huntingdon is one of my brightest girls," Miss Smith used to say to Mr. Graham, the principal, with a shake of her head; "but oh dear me, if she only *could* remember!"

Just before the bell rang, her own particular friends trooped in, to find her still walking up and down, book in hand.

"Amy," said Fanny, putting her hand on her arm to attract her attention, "never mind; what's staying in one recess, when tipping over's coming afterward!"

"I know it," sighed Amy; "if it wasn't for that, I do believe I should give up."

"One mark for Amy Huntingdon for speaking after the bell rang," said Miss Smith, and after that Amy felt sure nothing more *could* happen. But something did. It was when Amy was running upstairs after dinner to hunt up her fur mittens, that her mother called after her,

"Amy, be sure and take off your heart; I am so afraid you might lose it."

"Yes, 'm," Amy answered, "I'll be sure to," and her hand went up to her neck, where hung, on a narrow velvet, a little gold heart, one that Grandma Huntingdon used to wear when she was a little girl, and that she had given Amy on her birthday.

But those mittens! They were not on the wardrobe shelf, where they ought to have been, nor in any of Amy's bureau drawers, nor in her closet, nor even in the boys' room; they were away down at the darkest end of the umbrella and rubber closet, in the lower hall, thrown down with the little girl's skates. And who would have thought of looking there? Amy didn't till the *very* last thing. Then

"Amy," said Fanny.—Page 174.

there was another race for school; so perhaps it is no wonder that Amy quite forgot all about the gold heart, and it still hung around her neck when the girls were hurrying on their cloaks and hats, after school.

Jimmy Huntingdon, himself, brought Cream to the school door, and, because he was a polite boy, helped the five girls in. Everybody who wasn't going with them stopped to see those five girls pack themselves into that one-seated "cutter." Lily, Fanny, and Annie Edwards sat on the seat, Amy and Annie Lawrence sat on their laps, and Amy drove old Cream, who looked for all the world like a very, very fat boiled Indian pudding, trotted off at his funny little hop-into-a-walk jog, that no amount of screaming, laughing, or shaking of reins could hurry; for, as Amy used to say, "Cream never minded girls at all, and the thing that he could do best was to stand still."

"Boyington's Lane" is in the country, and the girls had quite a long ride before them to reach the narrow road that ran between two large meadows, toward the lake. There were no houses anywhere near, in those days, and no one to see what they were going to do. The girls felt as if they had the world quite to themselves for that afternoon.

There were no rocks, nor trees even, to break the force of the wind; so it always had a good time with the snow

there, and was very apt to hurry it off from the fields into the road and ditches on the sides, and toss and tumble it into hills and mountains on both sides of the narrow track the farmers had beaten going to town.

Amy drove carefully along. Cream had dropped at once into a walk, as if he remembered from last Winter what was coming. The girls looked all around, but no one was coming, not even a dog.

"There's a good one," said Annie Lawrence. "Now, girls, hold on!"

For Amy was driving straight into a great drift. The sleigh tipped; tipped a little more. The girls screamed and laughed at the very top of their strong lungs. The buffalo-robe began to slide, and Annie was clinging with all her might to the dash-board, when Cream, with a shake of his wise old head, as much as to say, "Such nonsense!" took the reins in his own hands, or mouth rather, and floundered out into the road again, with the sleigh back on two runners behind him.

"Oh!" said the girls all in a breath, "that's too bad."

"There's another," said Amy, driving straight on. "Now, Cream, you've *got* to tip us over this time. Do you hear?"

And Cream heard. He walked manfully into the edge of the drift; the sleigh began to tip slowly, very slowly.

"Girls," said Amy, pretending to be very much frightened, "I am afraid—I do believe we are going to tip ov—— Oh! oh!"

They *were* over.

Annie and Amy sailed off, with the buffalo-robe, quite over the heads of the other three, and sat down very hard and far in a drift on the other side of the road; and in the middle of the road there lay such a queer bunch of blue, brown, and green dresses, waving red mittens and rubber boots, knocked-in hats and laughter, that it was hard enough to tell where the three girls began or ended.

"That was perfectly splendid," said Lily, who was the first one to get on her feet again. "And just look at that beautiful old Cream!"

For Cream, who of course had been left to look out for himself, had drawn the sleigh into the road again—it had fallen back on its two runners—and stood quietly shaking his bells, and laughing to himself, I guess, while the girls were gathering themselves and the buffalo-robes together.

But that was only the first one. The snow got in their mittens, down their wrists, and into their rubber-boots. Amy bumped her head on the sleigh-runner until she saw stars, and Lily went head-foremost into a great drift, and had to be pulled out, almost smothered. Everybody's ribbon had

come off from their hair before the second tip-over; but, dear me, what difference did *that* make? The snow-drifts, the whole length of Boyington's Lane, from the south road to the railroad track, were printed with girls' muffs, buffalo-robes, and footmarks, till I'm sure the next farmer who came along must have thought that something terrible had happened.

Whatever Cream thought about all the fun he kept quite to himself, as usual, and jogged home as soberly as ever, when, after sunset, the fast-coming twilight reminded the five there were such things as home and supper.

"The *loveliest* time," exclaimed Amy, as she took her place at the supper-table, "that ever was in the world! I've laughed and laughed till I'm so tired."

"I don't doubt that in the least," answered her mother, smiling; "and I'm so glad to see that you remembered to take off your heart, little daughter."

Amy's hand flew up to her neck, and all the smiles vanished as, without asking permission, she jumped up from the table and ran upstairs to her room. The heart was not on the bureau, nor in the top drawer, nor on the table, nor even on the bed. Nurse had not seen it even when she came in to light the gas and put away her clean clothes. And then Amy was *certain* of what she had been very sure

before, that she had never taken it off at all, but had lost it in the snow. There was nothing for her to do but to go down and tell mamma.

"So many tip-overs," said she, when Amy had told her of all the day's misfortunes, from the untidy desk to grandma's lost treasure; "so many tip-overs. And I think it must be because she's careless, or gives it too many things to think of at once, my little girl's memory seems to tip over as easily as the sleigh did, and scatters all her good resolutions as far as the muffs and mittens flew."

"I wish it didn't do any more harm to tip over my memory than it does to tip over that old sleigh," said Amy tearfully.

"But it does, dear; and it will do more and more harm as you grow older, if you do not try very hard to get over such a bad habit. If the losing of the little gold heart would keep you from forgetting again, I don't think but that even grandma would think it had done you more good than the wearing of it could give you pleasure."

. . . . . .

But the little gold heart was not lost forever after all, and it came back to Amy in such a funny way. It was the very last of March, when all the snow had melted under the bright Spring sun. The frost was coming out of the

ground, and all the roads were so muddy and wet that no one but the boys cared to jog around behind old Cream. It was one sunshiny Saturday that three of them had been out in the country to see a boy, and were coming home again through Boyington's Lane, when Fred—who always saw everything there was for a boy to see, from round pebbles in the road to squirrels whisking out of sight over the fences—saw something glittering in the water of the little brook that ran in the ditch by the road-side, and, jumping out, pounced down upon it.

"Amy's heart, as sure as you're alive!" he called out. "Wont that girl be pleased!"

It had slipped down with the melting snow till it lay on the stony ground, all ready to be picked up and carried home to the little girl, who, though she would be just as anxious to go upon tipping-over rides when the snow came again, was really trying hard not to tip over quite so often in her memory.

# THE TIME THAT HERBERT WENT ALONE TO GRANDMA'S.

"THIS is from Grandmamma Spencer," mamma said one morning at breakfast, looking up from the letter she was reading, at the two small people who were sitting on one side of the table, busy with their hominy and cream; "right from West Farms. And listen, Herbert, here is something that will interest you," and his mother read:

"'As you are all coming up so soon, why not let Herbert come by himself on Tuesday for a little visit alone? *My* Herbert sails for China on the seventeenth, and as he only remembers his namesake a crying small baby in long clothes, he would like to see what he has grown up to be. The afternoon train reaches West Farms at five o'clock. Jim shall be at the station to meet him, and we shall all be very glad to see the little boy.'"

Herbert's face grew red, and he began to eat hominy very fast when mamma finished reading and looked up again. He did not like to think of going away from mamma and

Bess and everybody; but there was the importance of being large enough to take a journey alone, and Bess's eyes were already growing very large and round as she looked respectfully at him. So when his mother said, "How would you like it, dear?" he tried to answer in a deep manly voice that he thought perhaps it would be a very good plan, which made Bessie look at him with greater respect than ever, and get down from the table thinking what a nice thing it was for Herbert to be a boy, and ten years old.

"Now *I'm* eight and a half," Bessie went on thinking; "but everybody keeps saying girls must never play foot-ball and climb such high trees, and I know if I was ten, or even eleven or twelve, mamma wouldn't ever let *me* go to grandma's alone. I wish I was a boy." But she wasn't; so poor Bess had to put up with being nothing but a girl all that day, and listen to Herbert's plans.

"You see," he explained in a lofty way, "this going all alone by myself will be just like being grown up. I can sit by the car-window all the way if I want to, and not have to take turns with you and the baby, and I shall give the conductor *my own* ticket."

Herbert paused to make that impressive, and when Bessie looked properly impressed he went on:

"The wagon will come down to meet *me*, if I am alone,

and I shall ask Jim to let me drive all the way home, and of course he will. I shall feed the ducks and turkeys, go with Jim after the cows, and perhaps the reason Uncle Herbert wants to see me is to give me with *his own hands* that beautiful ship in his room. It's very nice to be a boy, and almost grown up."

But Herbert had to say that over to himself a good many times the next morning, when mamma began to take the clean clothes out of his own particular drawer in the children's bureau and pack them snugly in papa's satchel.

"You must be a particularly good boy, dear," she said, when he made one of his frequent excursions into the room with a ball of cord he wished to have packed. "Try hard to remember not to make a great noise in the house; save it for out-doors. Grandma and grandpa are old people, you know, and it's a good while since they have been used to boys. Be sure and go to bed promptly at eight o'clock; don't pick any fruit unless grandpa gives you permission, and if you should get homesick, though I don't believe there is any danger, remember that in only seven days you'll see us all again."

And mamma gave a comforting pat, with her hand full of brown stockings, to the curly head that was leaning very far out of the window for a look at the wasps' nest under

the eaves; but there was such a queer gray mist—Herbert was sure it couldn't be tears—before his eyes, that he had to draw his head in again without seeing the nest, and after muttering something about going to look for his ball, the little boy ran off to the tool-house, and climbing up into the loft, where he was sure of being alone, because Bessie had been forbidden to climb the high ladder, had a quiet cry all between his red dotted handkerchief and himself, after which he felt better.

But the garden did look very pleasant that morning, and his own flower-bed was only half weeded. Tom was cutting the lawn, too. After that he was going to use the hose, and he was always good-natured enough to let Herbert hold it as long as he wanted to. Somebody might forget to feed the dog if he went away, then Major would howl, and perhaps papa would say he ought to be given away. The cook was going to make some raspberry short-cakes on Thursday. Mamma had promised to drive the children down to the bay and get old Mr. McGinnis to take them out rowing. On the whole, when Herbert thought it over, almost any other time would have been pleasanter to go away in than that particular week; and Herbert went in to dinner in a very low-spirited condition.

But his spirits rose again—oh yes, quite a good deal—

"Good-by, dear."—Page 185.

when papa brought out a beautiful new black purse, with Herbert's initials, H. P. S., in very curly gold letters on the outside. Inside were four shining silver quarters and a new, crisp two-dollar bill.

"Your pocket money for the month," his father explained; "and the money for your ticket. You can buy peanuts with the change, if you like. The coach will be here promptly by twenty minutes of three, and I'll come to the station to see you off."

Herbert's heart began to beat very fast. Yes, it really was pleasant to be going on a journey; and after dinner he had to bustle about so, hurry into his second-best suit, and give so many parting directions about Major and the two guinea-pigs to Bess, that he forgot all his morning's doubts, and could hardly stand still while mamma brushed his hair and tied his new blue cravat.

The coach was at the door, his satchel stowed away on top with a great deal of other baggage, and the driver standing, watch in hand, by the side of the steps, before he had time to breathe even, it seemed to Herbert.

"Good-by, dear," whispered mamma, with her arm around his neck and one hand tight in his. "Don't forget to ask God every night and morning to keep you safe from harm." And then there was only time for her last soft kiss, a scram-

ble into the coach and on a seat, and a shout of "Be sure to come on Tuesday!" before the steps were up, the driver had swung himself into his seat, the horses were trotting, and the coach had whisked round the corner; and Herbert had not looked back half as long as he wanted to at the smiling faces on the vine-covered piazza.

"Do not on any account put your head out of the window, and don't leave your seat. Good-by." And in a moment Herbert's father was lost to his view in the crowd as the train moved out of the depot.

It *was* very nice at first, after he got the curious mist out of his eyes again, to watch the trees and fields fly by, and very nice, Herbert thought, to have the window all to himself for so long, but a little lonely. Yes, quite lonely, not to have any one to compare notes with about the prancing horses, startled sheep, and scurrying dogs. As for the ticket, a very fat old market-woman had squeezed herself and her great basket into the seat beside Herbert, crowding him much more than Bess ever did, and *she* took his ticket out of his hand and gave it to the conductor with her own, just as if he had been *her* child instead of mamma's! and he travelling alone, too!

When the brakeman shouted "West Farms," Herbert was very glad to hurry out of the train, almost, but not quite,

forgetting his satchel, the old woman had asked him so many questions. Jim and the wagon were there as close to the platform as the gay black horses were willing to come, and when the long hill was safely passed, and the train already several miles away, he *did* give Herbert the reins; and sitting up very erect, and keeping his eyes straight before him, he *did* drive all the rest of the way to the farm.

It was very nice indeed to go visiting, after all, Herbert thought, when he found grandma watching for him, and a plenty of fresh cookies and raspberries and cream, besides just as much milk as a boy could drink for supper. Grandma was the next thing to mamma always, and her petting was very comfortable when it began to grow dark, for she was always ready to listen to long stories of dogs, boys, and tramps with Bessie. But very soon grandpa and Uncle Herbert, who had been out in the garden smoking, came in. Grandpa believed that children should be *seen* and not heard; besides, he wanted to read the paper; so grandma hunted out an old volume of Peter Parley from the book-case, and made a place for the little boy at the table where his Uncle Herbert was drawing.

The book was an old acquaintance. Herbert could remember reading it every Summer since he had been old enough to read at all, and it did not interest him very long.

His eyes wandered to his uncle's drawings; but they were queer mathematical figures, so he looked at his grandfather, frowning and shaking his head at something that did not please him in the paper, and grandma, nodding over her knitting; at the peacock feathers over the looking-glass, the asparagus branches in the fire-place, and the twinkling silver candlesticks. At home perhaps mamma was reading to Bess out of the new fairy-book, or papa had put down *his* paper for a game of "Loto," or mamma was toasting the baby's toes in front of the little fire in the nursery, and Bessie was undressing her doll beside her. Herbert could see all this so plainly, and even mamma's smile when she admired Miss Arabella's new cradle, that he was quite surprised to find a tear, and then several more, splashing down on poor Peter Parley.

Just then the tall clock in the hall hiccoughed eight times, and grandma, waking up with a start, suggested bed. Herbert was very glad to go there and have a quiet cry all to himself for the home, and the dear people in it, he had never been away from alone before. And there was only one hope in life when he fell asleep, and that was that in seven more days he would see them all again.

The bright sun shining in his window the next morning made life look much brighter to the little boy, and in the

daytime it was only once in a while that the dreadful longing for mamma and Bessie, and everything at home, if it was only the house itself, and every one gone down town, came over him, for there was a great deal for a boy to see and do on such a large farm. The poultry to feed, sheep to help salt, cows to drive to their Summer pasture—the river-meadow—and back again, long rides with grandpa or Jim to the post-office or the mills, and one delightful day of tramping and fishing with Uncle Herbert. But the home-sickness always lay in wait for him, and even came around the corner of the house to meet him when he came back at night; and it always seemed to Herbert that, if it had not been that he would be able to rub out another of the seven little black marks he had made on the wall when he woke up in the morning, he should have to go right home, if he walked every step of the way.

"I am going to be a great deal better to Bess than I ever have been before," he said to himself, as he dressed in a great hurry, when, the seven days passed, Tuesday morning really came again. "I have missed her ever so much, if she *is* a girl, and girls *are* pretty nice after all. Bess is real good; she always says she's sorry first. And she's real generous, too. I've been mean and cross to her a good many times, but she's a sister worth having. She isn't afraid

to go anywhere when I tell her to. I wish it was afternoon, and I could see that old white head of hers coming out of the car-door; wouldn't I just hug her though!" and Herbert had to hug a chair to relieve his feelings.

It was the longest day! Herbert urged the ducks and chickens to be on their good behavior that afternoon; arranged and rearranged his new treasures in the old tool-house grandpa had given him for a museum; declined to go to the mills with his grandfather, for fear he should not be back in time to go to the train; was dressed, brushed, and ready by three o'clock to start for the station, and had nothing to do from that until four but to worry Jim to harness the horses, and imagine that he heard the whistle of the train.

"What's the use?" Jim said, when, really off, Herbert was begging him to drive fast. "What's the use (really, we're in plenty o' time, and it's a warm day) to kill horses? Maybe, too, your folks has missed the train and wont come until to-morrow. There's no trusting of how things will happen in this world," with a solemn shake of the head.

Herbert's heart gave one bound, and then sank down again heavy as any little boy's heart could possibly be. Supposing that they did not come, and he *should* have to live until to-morrow, and that seemed years away, before he saw

them! How *could* he? How unkind it was of Jim to speak of such a thing!

The train came dashing in with all the pomp and bustle of a fast express as they reached the station, and a yellow head was poked out of a window and drawn in again. It *was* Bess! In a moment more they were all on the platform; mamma and papa with their hands full of bundles and baskets; Bess racing to meet him, carrying her own particular boxed-up cat very carefully; and baby, with a crow and a jump, all ready for her brother in nurse's arms. And oh how glad the little boy was to see them! Papa said afterwards that it did seem as if there would not be kisses enough to go around, it took so many of them.

"Mamma," Herbert whispered, when the baby was having its usual toasting and he was nestled as close to his mother's side as a little boy could get, "I'm *so* glad to see you! and I'm never, *never* going away first again; never! And if I'm cross, and don't want to do things for you, or selfish to Bess, all you'll ever want to say will be to remind me of the time that I went alone to grandma's, and I'll be just as good as I can be, and of so much use to you that you couldn't possibly let me go away without you all again."

# A DAY AT GRANDMA'S.

A WILD charge down the staircase, as of a troop of horses, a prancing and dancing in the lower hall, as if all the horses were trying to out-do one another in practising the polka step; a pulling and a tugging at the door-handle until the door flew open; another charge down the stone steps of more horses than ever, it seemed, and then everybody precipitated themselves upon a defenceless gentleman, who was quietly taking bundle after bundle out of the carriage, knocked his hat off, made the bundles fly right and left, pushed his cravat under his left ear, choked him with frantic embraces and suffocating hugs, and then danced the wildest kind of a war-dance around him; shouting, "The letter! Oh, the letter!" "Do, please, let us have it!" "What does grandma say?" "When can we go?" "Oh, papa, please *do* hurry!"

For their father, quite out of breath and bewildered, had seated himself on one of the stone posts at the foot of the steps, was carefully dusting off his hat, and looking at the two children in front of him.

For there were only two of them. Two pairs of feet had made all that noise, and two pairs of arms had done all the mischief, and papa shook his head gravely as he began to pick up his bundles again.

"Letter?" he said, looking at the eager children, who were still prancing and shouting together. "I don't think I have any letter for *you*. This letter," holding up the one he had waved, as he drove in at the lodge gates, to the two eager faces pressed against the screen in mamma's window, "this letter is directed to Master and Miss Stewart, and is from their grandmother"—here the dancing and shouting began again—"but," shaking his head, "I know Mrs. Stewart of High Ridge Farm very well; she's my mother, and I'm sure *her* grandchildren are not shrieking, prancing savages, that tear out of a person's front door and fall upon him with scalping-knife and hatchet under their aprons, most likely demanding letters as if they were robbers, and hadn't the slightest regard for another person's feeling when he comes home tired from the city, and thinks he would like a kiss;" and their father shook his head again, never smiled at all, and started up the steps, with his arms full of bundles.

"But, papa," Amy was half crying by this time, "I *am* your little girl, and that *is* our letter. Wont you please

give it to us? and I've been saving up a lot of kisses for you all day."

Papa half relented then, for the little voice was a very sweet one, and there was the sound of a suspicious quiver in it, while a little hand gave an entreating tug at his coat-tail. But he started on again, after a glance at the tear-stained, dirty face, the terribly dirty apron, dress, and stockings, and the tangled, tumbled hair.

"No, indeed," he said again, decidedly, "I shall have to go in the house to look for my little girl. *She* never comes to meet me with such a dirty face. Couldn't you call her for me?" And then, with never a glance at Jack, whose hands, face, and hair were in even a worse condition, the children's father hurried upstairs, two steps at a time, to look for mamma, leaving the disconsolate ones staring at one another in the lower hall.

"He's got it!" Jack whispered at last, finding that Amy's tender heart was too much overcome at the thought of her father's going to look up another little girl to think of anything else; "he's got it! Don't you know he said so? And the way for us to do is to go right straight upstairs on tip-toe and get dressed just as fast as we can."

A moment afterwards their father, busily brushing his hair for dinner, smiled a little smile all to himself and

mamma as he heard the feet tip-toe carefully past the door on their way to the nursery.

Ten minutes afterwards, when Mr. and Mrs. Stewart had taken their places at the dinner-table, the door opened very gently, and there walked quietly into the room two very clean, well-dressed little people, whose smooth, shining hair it was a pleasure to look at, and who, with half-averted eyes, looked shyly at their father, waiting for him to speak.

"Oh, my dears, how glad I am to see you!" he said, laying down his spoon; "come and give me ever so many kisses; and where *were* you when I drove up the avenue? Here is a letter for two small people," he went on, taking that treasure out of his pocket and holding it up, "all the way from High Ridge Farm and grandma. For you two chick-a-biddies. Shall I read it, that we may all know what she says?"

Every one thought that would be a delightful plan, and Amy had to give little leaps in her chair, she was so happy; while Jack's toes wiggled so in the ends of his shoes, I wonder they didn't find their way out into the world, as papa cleared his throat with a very loud and impressive "Ahem!" and then began.

"My Dear Little Grandchildren: Grandpa came in from the great meadow this morning, and said, 'We are

going to cut the hay on Friday. You must send for the children.' So I am writing now to tell you that all those baskets and bundles that Amy brought up with her last Summer, all your whipcord and fishing-lines, Jack, must be packed in a great hurry; and my two dear grandchildren must be at the Meadowlands Station on Friday afternoon with their father and mother, with their minds quite made up to leave all quarrels and frettings behind them, when they come to spend a month at High Ridge Farm."

The children looked at one another when papa finished the letter, and Amy smiled at Jack, while Jack smiled back again, as much as to say, "Oh, we'll never do that again!" And then followed such a chattering of two nimble tongues that papa and mamma could only smile and signal what they wanted to say across the noise; and that almost, but not quite, reminded papa of the prancing savages, until the children were excused and hurried off to pack the treasures grandma had mentioned, and a great many more besides.

Friday morning came at last, bright and beautiful, in spite of the children's fears that it never *would* come, and if it ever did, that it would rain; but here it was, with a cloudless sky, a blazing Summer sun, and "beautiful weather to cut hay in," as Jack said, staring wisely up into the blue sky.

There was the long carriage-drive to the station, when

every dog that barked, horse that pranced, or child that stared, seemed to do so for their special benefit. And then came the delightful bustle at the railroad station, where their father hurried off for tickets and to check trunks, while mamma and Ann counted the shawls and umbrellas, and the children found almost too much to do in watching the hurrying crowd of people, the porters running in and out among them, rolling heavy trucks of baggage, the boys that sold peanuts and candy, the boys that sold popcorn and newspapers, until the great, shining, steaming monster that dragged the long train slid into the depot, and in a few moments puffed out again, with Amy and Jack nodding and smiling from one of the windows to David, who stood at the fidgety horses' heads until the train was safely out of sight and hearing.

If I should try to tell you about all the wonderful things the children saw on that happy day's journey I should never get to the hay-field; so I'll only say that never were there such smiling fields, drowsy cows, galloping horses, high hills, and beautiful rivers, as those they darted through, past, and over, that day; and Amy was only just beginning to think that, perhaps, she was tired of sitting still, and even of eating ginger-snaps, when mamma began to gather up the shawls, and their father said, "Here is Meadowland Station."

Grandpa was waiting for them there with the great three-seated wagon, with Prince and Penelope drawing it. The children were sure the horses knew them from the first moment they called out to them; and they *did* put back their ears and look at them in a very wise and speaking way.

Every tree, fence, and stone along the ridge road towards the farm were old friends of the children; every corner of the old stone walls, with their quaint banners of vines hung out to greet them, was hailed with delight; every rock, with its lichen-covered face, seemed to smile back a welcome. The children even thought they remembered and missed the branches their grandfather said had been blown off the great elm at the "Four Corners," in the last Winter's storms. But presently everything else was forgotten when the red gates of the farm came in sight, and Watch, the mastiff; Beauty, the spaniel; besides all the sheep-dogs, came running out to meet their friends the horses, and yelped and barked and bounced with delight when they heard the children's voices.

Grandma Stewart was waiting for them in the great hall doorway, and behind her, in front of the west door, was the supper table—standing just where papa could look at the clouds and drink his tea both at the same time. The table

was loaded down with plenty of bread and butter, berries, and new milk, and the wonderful caraway-seed cookies that nobody made but grandma.

No wonder a little breeze hurried in before the children, and danced among the flowers, and waved the tablecloth, because there was such a nice supper.

"Did you leave them all behind?" grandma whispered, as she kissed the eager faces held up to her.

"What, the fishing lines and baskets? No, they're all here, and we're going to have a lovely time with them."

"I'm glad of that, dear, and am sure you will have your lovely time if you have only left behind the bad faults that make my dear little boy and girl so disagreeable sometimes to themselves and other people. Have you shut them up tight in the largest closet in the house and turned the key on them? I hope so."

How the children laughed! Grandma was always so funny!

"Anyhow," said Jack, "if we did forget to shut them up, they wont trouble us here. When we're going to have such a nice time, how could they?"

For an answer grandma only had a kiss and a pat apiece that night; but the next morning, as the children were starting off with the dogs, and Ann and her mending basket,

she called them into the store-room and loaded each child's pockets with seed cakes.

"Grandma," said Amy, remembering the last night's conversation, "what will you give me if I don't say one cross word, a single one, to-day? Something nice?"

"Yes, dear," smiled grandma, "I've always thought that when my Amy had tried hard enough to have given up all her fretting, I should give her the gold beads your dear Aunt Sybil always used to wear; and if no one hears a cross word from those little lips for this whole day, you shall have them to wear all the rest of your visit, to help you to remember; and very soon, at that rate, you'd earn them for yourself. What do you think of that, dear?"

"I'll get them," nodded Amy, "you'll see."

"And what can I have, grandma?" put in Jack, who felt himself entirely too much in the background; "what will you give me?"

"Grandpa has something for you, dear," and then she whispered something in his ear that made Jack grin delightedly, look very important, and go through an elaborate pantomime of pulling a watch from his pocket, looking at it carefully, and putting it back again with a great flourish. "Uncle Dick's silver watch; don't you wish you could wear it, Amy?"

"No," said contented Amy; "I'd rather have the gold beads."

But the dogs were yelping and scratching at the door to know what the children meant by keeping them waiting so long; the birds were calling, the chickens clucking, the ducks quacking, and the hay-scented breezes whispering, "What can keep the children in the house so long such a beautiful morning?" So with a last "Be careful and don't forget," from grandma, they skipped off, with the dogs tumbling after, and Ann having a hard time to keep them in sight.

They paid a thousand visits that morning—to the pigs, grunting over their breakfast of buttermilk in their own comfortable house; to the skipping calves in the lower pasture, all by themselves; carried a dish of salt to the sheep, and tried to count the lambs as they galloped after their mothers; visited the ducks at the pond, the turkeys in the corn-field, and the colts in their pasture; but, saving the pleasantest for the last, skirted the great meadow and kept out of the hay-making until it came time for the hay-makers' dinner.

That always came down to them in shining tin pails from the house, and the children, knowing all the men and women by name, were fond of dipping into each and every

pail, making a substantial dinner, until they could eat no more, and took themselves off to roll away the uncomfortable tightness of dress and waistband on the hay-cocks. All this time things had gone as smoothly as possible; there was nothing but sunshine between the children, as well as overhead.

Then the fun began. One end of the great field was always allowed to the children for a rolling place; so up one hay-cock and down another they rolled, the dogs frolicking and jumping after them. The hay was raked, piled up, and flattened down; the dogs were buried, one at a time, seeming to understand the fun as well as anybody, until nothing but an energetic tail, that *would* wiggle out, was in sight. The children hid themselves in great mounds of hay, and the dogs dug them out; the sun shone, the children laughed, the dogs barked, and the hay flew, and every one was happy, until—for here was where the mischief began—Jack threw hay at Amy at quite the wrong times, when she was busily burying Watch, and the hay-dust got in her eyes; when she had just raked up a beautiful mound, and his armful toppled it over; when she was trying to make Fuss sit up on his hind legs, and the hay upset both him and his dignity. Each time her "Don't, Jack! do stop!" grew sharper, and Jack's laugh more provoking. Each was forgetting, and after a

That the queen wore a crown.—Page 203.

while the worst came. Amy was curled up at the foot of a hay-cock, her hands clasped around her knees, singing a little song to herself, and making believe that fairies lived in the woods near the hay-field, and these moonlight nights came to dance in the hay-field; and that the queen wore a crown of dew-drops on her head, and—— Crash came a great torrent of hay over her head, her face, covering her so entirely that it was quite a long minute before the indignant white sun-bonnet bobbed in sight again.

"Jack Stewart," she began, for Jack was rolling over and over in his delight, "you're the meanest, horridest boy that ever lived! and I'm *never* going to speak to you again! You've scratched my arm and my hand, and blinded all my eyes; and I'm full of hay-seeds. I'll tell grandma; you see if I don't." And then seeing that Jack only laughed, Amy lay down and began kicking and screaming to the extent of her small ability.

"Cry, baby cripsy!" Jack began. "Cry, baby, cry; stick your finger in your eye!" But you don't want to hear the rest. There was a pitched battle between the two, till the dogs ran away in astonishment, and Ann's "Hush, my dears!" and "Oh mys!" were of no use at all, till it ended, as the battles usually did, in Amy's hurrying off to find her mother, to pour her sorrows into her ears, and Jack's calling after her

until she was out of sight and hearing, the names she particularly disliked to be called.

Grandma was knitting in the east door when the little girl ran round the house and began:

"There never was such a horrid boy as Jack! He——" And then it all came back to her—grandma's talk in the morning, the promise of the gold beads, and how sure she had been of being good all day; and the little girl put her apron over her face, and cried and cried until the sound of Sukey, the cow, unhooking the red gate with her horn, made her look up to see that the cows were coming home to be milked, and grandma was all ready to take her up in her lap for a cuddle and a whisper of:

"It isn't so very easy, even when things are pleasant, to be good, is it, dear?"

"No," came a voice from around grandma's shoulder, which made them both jump; for there stood Jack, looking very red and sorry; "it isn't a bit easy to be good all day; but it's all my fault, 'cause I threw the hay on Amy."

"No, it's my fault, because I called you names first," Amy hurried to say. "*I* was the one that spoiled the day."

"Not *spoiled* it, dears, as long as you are both sorry, and going to, I'm sure, try to do better," said their grandma; "only very nearly spoiled. And remember this, children, that

evil habits and evil thoughts can only be cured and driven away by fighting against them every day and all the time, and by asking the dear Lord to help us fight all our battles; and you must fight hard yourselves against them, for you promised to fight manfully under His banner all your lives long. And better, a thousand times better, than beads or watches, or anything I can give you, is Christ's promise that His faithful soldiers shall dwell with Him the life everlasting."

# A RECIPE FOR A RAINY DAY.

"WHAT shall we do?" whined Bobby; and "Vat sall ve do?" echoed the baby, as the two pairs of short legs trotted into the mother's room for about the tenth time in half an hour.

It was such a rainy day! Not a mild little Summer rain, that boys in thick coats and rubber-boots would not mind at all, but only have a good time splashing about in the gutters, but a rain that roared, and poured, and bounced; that beat the flowers from their stems, and the leaves from the trees; that turned the gravel walks into canals and ponds, and the carriage-way into a boiling river. Every one was in-doors, and not even a stray market-wagon hurried by. There was nothing at all for the children to look at out of the window but the tumbling rain and the wind-beaten trees; for all the birds and dogs were safe under shelter; and the six children who lived in the pretty stone house on the hill were having a hard time of it.

At least four of them were. Bell and Bess, the twins, were having a very nice time, or would have been if "those

children," as they were apt to call the four younger brothers and sisters, would only have left them alone; for Bess was hard at work on her beloved and particular scrap-book, with a good deal of litter—of paste, scraps of paper, and pictures; while Bell was busy with her recipe-book.

The girls who went to Miss Woodruff's school were always busy making something out of school-hours. For a while it was book-marks, and many were the wonderful results their nimble little fingers performed, with the help of card-board, beads, worsted, and silk. Then it was lamp-mats, and the eye was bewildered with the astonishing results of blue and crimson, yellow, green, and red. Just now some one had proposed that it would be an excellent plan for each girl to have a recipe-book, just like her mother's, and Mr. Brown, the man who kept the one bookstore in the place, wondered very much what made his small blank books in such sudden demand, for each girl, of course, must have one. Then small fingers were busy again, and old recipes from mammas' books were copied, new ones were eagerly sought for; and to-day, with her book but half full, Bell was struggling painfully over a long recipe for the making of brown bread, which she did not understand at all, and which, away down in her heart, she was very sure she should never want to use.

And all this time while I have been telling this long story, the two little boys were trotting into the room, with their mournful appeal; and down the nursery stairs came every now and then a sharp cry, the sound of a vigorous thumping, or a still more vigorous "Now, Harry, leave me alone!" or a howl of "Mamma, Harry's bothering me!" Poor mamma had a bad headache, but, though dizzy and miserable, had been doing her best to amuse the two little boys by improvising string harnesses, paper caps, and wonderful arrangements of feather dusters for feathers, until she had been forced to curl herself up on the sofa, with her head away from the light.

The little boys—coming to grief by their tall feathers falling down into the lower hall when they both looked over the balustrade of the stairs to see what the cat was doing—trotted in again, only to meet with a decided "Hush! you must be quiet!" from Bell, and a gentle "Little ones, you must run away upstairs," from grandma, who was knitting in her easy-chair by the fire.

"But what shall we do?" Bobby had whined in a more doleful key than ever, and baby had echoed it. Then the two had climbed the stairs to the nursery, and only seemed to add to the general unhappiness up there, judging from the sounds that found their way downstairs; for Nurse Sarah

was busy ironing, and there was no one to make the children happy.

"There! that's done at last," sighed Bell, wiggling her tired inky fingers, and looking musingly down at the page in front of her, covered with long straggling letters. "It's a great deal of trouble to copy recipes, don't you think so grandma? and I'm sure I don't know what I shall copy next."

"Would you like to have me give you an entirely new one?" said her grandmother, without looking up from her knitting. "It is one I'm sure you have never thought of; but perhaps you had better not write it down until you hear what it is, and even then wouldn't it be best to *try* it first before you put it into your book? That was always *my* plan with my recipes. Here it is. 'Take one cupful of unselfishness, one cup of love for mother, another cup of love for your little brothers and sisters, a whole pound of wishes to make other people happy, and a *very* small teaspoonful of wishing to be happy yourself.' Beat it all up together, and see if it does not make the nicest kind of an afternoon for everybody."

Mamma had opened her eyes, and was smiling a pale smile at her little daughter. Bess was sliding her pictures together, and picking up the scraps from the carpet in a great hurry, and looked up long enough to say, with a queer little smile:

"I know what *that* means. You want us to go and play with the children."

Grandma smiled and nodded back, saying, "What a clever girl to learn recipes;" and Bell wiggled, bit her pen-handle very hard, frowned, stared out at the dashing rain for a few moments, and then, as if she was trying to swallow something very unpleasant, said, "I'll try it," and ran out of the room and upstairs two steps at a time, leaving book, ink, and pen for careful Bess to pick up and put away before she followed her.

Things looked very uncomfortable in the nursery. Amy was trying to have a grand house-cleaning, and the contents of the great baby-house in the corner were scattered far and wide around her. Harry had been pretending to help, but instead of that had upset the bowl of water in which the little girl was washing the dolls' best tea-set; had broken the legs off from two chairs; had made all manner of fun and a good many faces at Augustus Adolphus, the gentleman doll, besides flourishing him about until his very insecure legs rattled in their sockets; and now that the baby and Bobby had come to his assistance, no wonder the little girl took refuge behind her very dirty apron, and was sobbing out her woes in its sympathizing folds.

Poor Bell stood in the door, looking dolefully around

her. Certainly it wasn't a very encouraging picture—the noisy, teasing boys; Amy's sobs and tears; the dreadfully littered room; and the dashing rain outside. But there is something, after all, in being the oldest sister, and being useful. So when Bess skipped up after her, the two fell to work, and in a very few moments, if there was no sunshine out-doors, there was in; for the house-cleaning was given up for that day, and Bell's and Bess's skilful fingers soon restored the dolls'-house to its usual order, while the others sat around and admired.

"Now, let's play keeping house," said Bell, banishing the last thoughts of what she would really like to do, as she put the last chair in its place, bent on keeping her word to grandma. "Bess, you take that corner, and I'll take this. You have Amy and Augustus and the china doll for your children, and Harry'll be your husband; and I'll take the baby and Bobby for my children. Who'll be my husband? Oh, nobody. I'll play he is gone off on a long journey, and the children'll go down to the office and get me letters from him every day. I'll have the wax doll for my child too. Come, Bobby and baby."

So very quickly, as if by magic, two noble mansions, built of chairs and shawls, appeared on opposite sides of the room. Small the doors were, and rather low down. In fact

the whole family were obliged to go down on their hands and knees, and crawl through, instead of walking in and out; and so crowded were they in their houses, these large families, that when night came—as it seemed to do pretty often—they covered the whole floor of the house with their beds, and even then were obliged to sleep with their heads and feet under the chairs. But such drawbacks are very slight in happy households; and the children of the two families caught any amount of whooping-cough and scarlet fever very cheerfully, and were cured of them by their mammas, with the help of judicious doses of sugar and water, quite as cheerfully.

The two families paid innumerable visits; and Mrs. Bess's husband was able to earn a great deal of money in no time at all, to judge from the little time he remained down at his office; while Mrs. Bell's letters arrived as rapidly as the baby's short legs could travel between his mother's house and the closet post-office.

A grand ball was given; a picnic, which the whole company of dolls were urged to attend. Calls were made and returned; and then, as the children began to wonder what they *could* think of to have happen next, Bess suggested a wedding.

"Between the dolls, you know. We'll have it just like

Miss Mary's, and Amy and the baby shall be the bridesmaid and groomsman, because they're so little. Daisy is such a lovely doll, she ought to have been married long ago; but who *can* she marry?"

"There's nobody but Augustus!" and Bell held up the forlorn gentleman doll.

How the children laughed! for the young gentleman in question had certainly seen his best days. His coat of red worsted was a good deal worn in several places; a stitch had broken, and ravelling showed the distressing fact that his body was made of cotton wool; his legs were very loose, and his toes turned gracefully in; one arm had lost a hand, and his one bead eye gazed wildly straight in front of him. But what of that? The children were sure that Augustus was possessed of many virtues. Had he not endured cheerfully, for no one knew how many nights, going to bed with the baby? and was he not always found in the morning, wide awake but uncomplaining, no matter where the baby had finally thrown him?

So Daisy, without having very much time to think about the matter, was hurried into her best dress, and after a triumphant march about the room, supposed to be in carriages on their way to the church, the company assembled about Harry, who, holding the two dolls, chanted these lines:

"Now you're married, you must obey;
You must be true to all you say;
You must be kind, you must be good,
And make your wife chop all the wood."

Which last command, I'm sure, I hope Augustus did not obey.

There was a grand reception after the wedding, in which the groom had his one hand so vigorously shaken that it came off; but that, I'm sure, was a trifle hardly worth mentioning. And during the wonderful dance which followed—

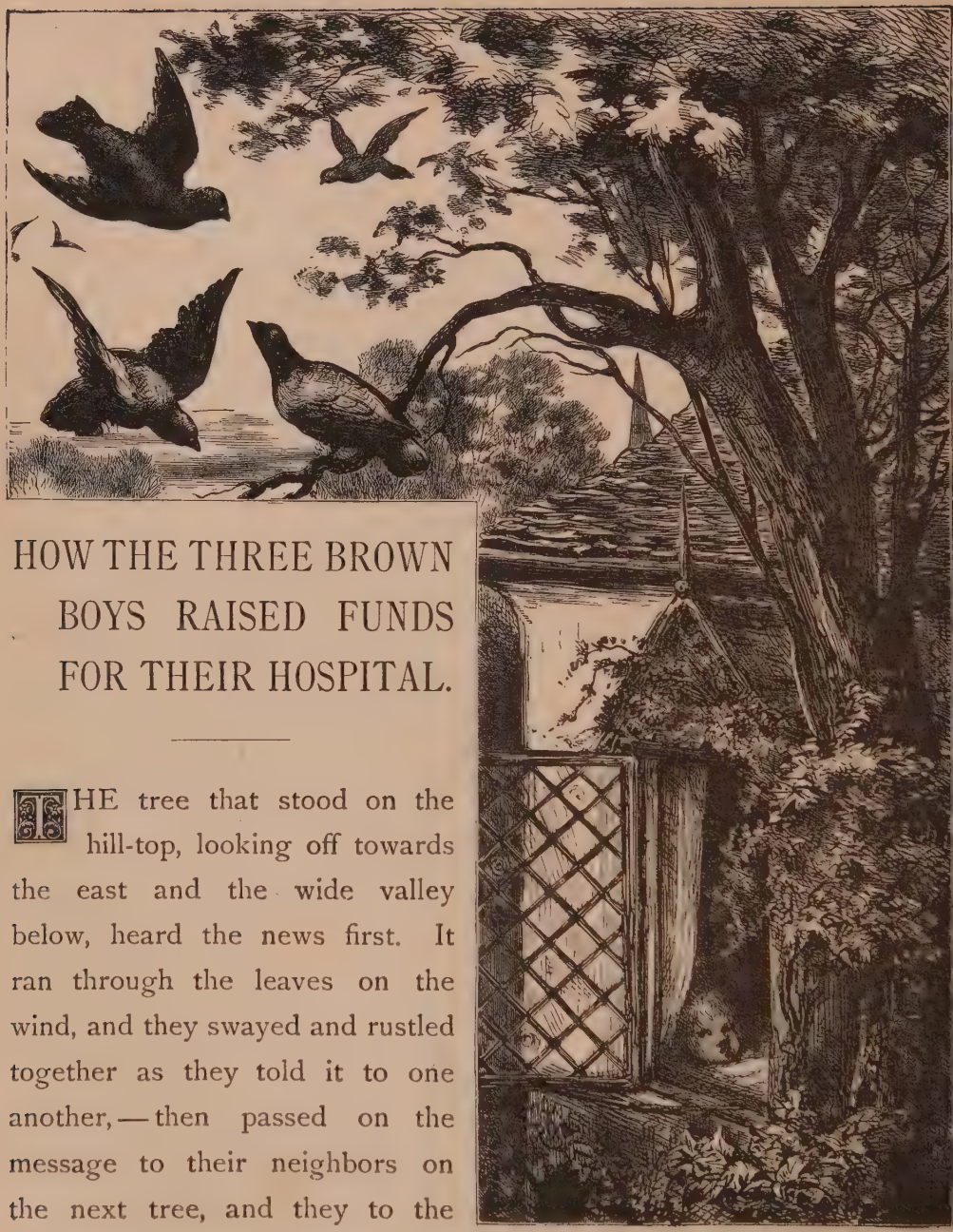
that consisted of a series of twirls and whirls, and a graceful waving of an old shawl, in which Bess and Bell alone appeared, while the other children and the dolls looked admiringly on—they were more astonished than you can possibly imagine to hear the ringing of the tea-bell. Mamma was in the dining-room, her head quite well again after a quiet nap, and she had a very loving, grateful kiss for each of the twins, as the children rushed up to tell her what a nice time they'd been having.

"I *love* to play when Bell and Bess play," said Bobby, rubbing his soft cheek against Bell's shoulder. "They're such good sisters when they play with us. A great deal gooder than when they make scrap-books."

"How do you like my recipe?" whispered grandma to Bell, as they sat down to the table. And the little girl, happier than any one else, because she had been unselfish, and trying to make the others happy, whispered back:

"Ever and ever so much!"

You big sisters who read this little story, please try Grandma Hammond's recipe some rainy afternoon, and see if you do not agree with Bell, that it is a very good one indeed for *any* one to have in her recipe-book.



# HOW THE THREE BROWN BOYS RAISED FUNDS FOR THEIR HOSPITAL.

THE tree that stood on the hill-top, looking off towards the east and the wide valley below, heard the news first. It ran through the leaves on the wind, and they swayed and rustled together as they told it to one another, — then passed on the message to their neighbors on the next tree, and they to the

next, until the whole hill-side was alive with the sound of stirring branches. Then a bird caught it, and chirped a short, sweet chirp that broke into a twitter, and then a trill of song, before he had fairly thrown back the bed-clothes by taking his head out from under his wing. A robin answered, and then another. And then away off in the east there came a strange glow, and some little white clouds that had been sailing slowly along grew suddenly very pink in the face, and scudded off at a great rate.

The light grew broader and brighter, the birds sang with all their little might and main, the trees swayed, and waved up and down in their excitement. Everything—birds, and trees, and scudding clouds—seemed to say:

"The sun is coming! Another day, a whole bright day, is coming! Wake up, wake up, little boys and girls to enjoy it!"

Then, as the sun came up above the horizon, the whisper and murmur of the leaves died softly away. The birds finished their singing, and went about their work, until—when the sun's first long golden waves rippled through the open half of a pretty gable window, and across the white bed where two very much tumbled brown heads were sleeping on the same pillow—they had finished their breakfast of fat spiders, taken their first bath, and were off, swallows and all, for a frolic in the meadow where the bobolinks lived.

The golden ripples grew broader and broader as they touched first one curly head on the pillow, and then the other, danced on the fat noses and summer-browned cheeks, stole under the long lashes, and pushed harder and harder against the white lids, till they found their way between them; and then, after a few twists and a little aimless thumping of four fat hands, two of the brown boys were wide awake.

Ammy sat up in bed to look around him. It was very early. No one was stirring in all that large house. Out in the hall—for the nursery door was open—he could see the long dark shadows that the night had left behind it still lying on the carpet. Not even the first whisk of Mary's broom reached his listening ears. Evidently there was nothing for him to do but to lie down again, for the brown boys were under orders not to get up for the day until Mary began sweeping.

Sammy was wide awake too, watching with great, solemn, wide-open eyes the pigeons sunning themselves outside of the window; and from Dick's corner of the room came stirrings that told of *his* awakening. Pretty soon he sat up in bed and whispered very loud:

"Sammy and Ammy, are you awake?"

"Yes, wide awake," answered both boys together.

"Then I'm coming over."

"Get the money first," said Ammy, bouncing up and down in bed until the springs creaked and complained.

"Where is it? In the sideboard?"

"Don't you know?" Sammy chimed in. "We hid it in mamma's stocking-basket last night. It was the night before we put it in the sideboard. The stocking-basket's on the table in the bay window. Robbers would never think of looking there!"

In his excitement Sammy had nearly tumbled out of bed by this time, and was talking in quite his usual tone of voice, and perhaps a little louder than usual. So Dick reminded him with a very loud "hush," and then started downstairs, looking like a small walking statue, in the dimness, in his white nightgown and bare feet.

How the stairs creaked! The two boys, holding their breaths to listen, were sure they had never made so much noise before in all the times they had raced up and down there.

And then, yes, Dick must have fallen over a chair, for there came such a crash and a clatter, and then an "Oh dear!" unmistakably in Dick's voice.

"He's hurt his toes," said the two, looking sympathizingly at one another.

Then came papa's voice.

"What's the matter, boys? What are you doing up in the middle of the night? Who has hurt himself?"

"It's only me," answered Dick mournfully. "And I didn't mean to wake anybody up. I thought I would come down just as softly for the money."

"What money?" said papa, very sleepily.

"The hospital money. Don't you know? We hid it in auntie's basket last night, because some robbers might come after it."

"Oh," was all the boys heard then, and a sound as if somebody was laughing; but it couldn't have been Dick, for when he limped into the room, with the money-bag in his hand, his face was quite as solemn as usual.

What a beautiful, shining stream it was that he poured out of the little flannel bag on the white counterpane! Bright ten-cent pieces and plenty of pennies that looked as if they had skipped straight out of the mint into the little boys' bag; and, yes, one, two, *three* twenty-five cent pieces.

"There," said all the boys together, drawing very long sighs.

"Isn't it beautiful?" Sammy went on. "Let's play we don't know how much there is here, and count it all over."

So the six fat hands fell to work, putting the tens and fives and the pennies in neat little piles for the treasurer to

count, which he did slowly and carefully out loud, while the president and the vice-president looked on and listened approvingly, and the pigeons peeped in at the window to see what was going on; but the boys were quite too busy to remember their corn as usual.

"Two dollars and twenty cents," the treasurer announced at last. "That's a great deal of money, and the cats will be very comfortable all Winter. It was real hard work, wasn't it boys? but it's nice to have it."

"Yes," they both agreed, and then Ammy's face broadened into a great solemn smile. I know it did when he added: "What do you suppose Miss Ellie will say?"

What would she? What did she? What was it all about? Would you like to know, children? For if you would, I will tell you the whole story in the boys' own words, just as they told it to me while we were sitting under the weeping willow that hangs over the little plot of ground where the cats that never could get well are sleeping.

"It was just when the Summer vacation began, the very next day," Ammy began the story, "that papa said, when he poured every speck of valerian out of his bottle into the one we keep in the hospital, that he thought the hospital ought to be self-supporting. And when we asked him what that big word meant, he said it meant that the cats ought to pay

for being taken care of, or if they couldn't, that the directors and managers and doctors of"——

"That's us, you know," Sammy chimed in.

——"ought to support it. And then what do you suppose he said? Why, that he was going to charge us five cents a big bottle for all the medicine he gave us, and that we must pay mamma five cents a month for the meat she gives us for the cats. Wasn't it dreadful, when we'd all of us promised all our five cents (we each have one every month, you know), for the Summer, to the little boy that hasn't any legs? The one that wheels himself around in a box, I mean. But papa didn't know that, and perhaps if he had, it wouldn't have made any difference, because he said he wanted his three boys"——

"I'm one of his boys, because my father and mother are up in heaven," Dick interrupted to explain.

——"to learn that the best part of charity and giving was to give what was really your own; that his medicine and mamma's meat wasn't ours, you know. And he said, too, that the Lord would love us better if we really worked hard to give something to other people, if they *were* only cats," the little boy half whispered, while the other brown eyes looked soberly at me.

"We didn't know what to do"—Sammy took up the

story very cheerfully, with a sense of a great deal of trouble well off his mind,—"so we went and asked grandpa. Jamie wasn't at home, you know. Grandpa said he'd give us five cents a week all the rest of the Summer; but that wouldn't have been earning it. So we said we couldn't take it, and we asked him if he couldn't remember how he used to earn money when he was a boy. But when he said drive the cows, and shell corn, and hoe potatoes, we were just as discouraged as we could be. Weren't we, boys?"

"Yes," the others agreed, with a comfortable chuckle and a sly little shake of the wonderful bag, to make sure that it was really there, so full of money.

"Then grandpa remembered that once he and another boy had kept a store, and made quite a good many pennies selling apples and sweet-flag root to the people going by. That was splendid! Grandpa thought we could have a store right in front of his house, close up to the fence in the road, because he could give us all the apples we could sell."

"And grandma promised to bake us cookies," said Ammy.

"And Aunt Annie said she would make molasses candy to sell," said Dick.

"Grandpa gave us boards and nails and everything. We built the store. Sammy pounded one of his fingers so

hard, he had to eat with his left hand and a spoon; and I got such a big sliver in my finger that papa had to cut it out. But that didn't make a speck of difference. Mamma wrote Jamie all about our store, and what it was for. So he painted us a sign, and sent it to us by express. We've got it now. Come and look at it!"

So we four journeyed round to the back of the hospital, where we found the sign, a bright blue one, with "Three Brown Boys, Dealers in Fruit and Confectionery," in long yellow letters on it, leaning gracefully against the little house.

When I had admired it to the boys' satisfaction, Sammy went on with the story:

"We used to go up to grandpa's every morning, and spread out the candy and apples and cookies on our counter, and then wait for people to come and buy. Sometimes we sold lots of things in one day; and one day we made fifty cents in the morning! Don't you remember, Ammy and Dick? It was the day that old gentleman was riding on horseback, and he said: 'Boys, have you got any nice apples?' And, of course, they were nice, because they were grandpa's, and so he bought three. Then he said: 'What are you going to do with the money you make, boys? Going to the circus?' We said 'No, indeed!' and told him it was for the hospital. He said 'What hospital?' And when

we told him 'The *cats*' hospital,' he laughed so he nearly fell from his horse. But we didn't care. Because he made us tell him all about it; and then he bought every single speck of the candy, all the apples and the cookies, and we had to borrow a basket of grandma for him to carry them home in."

"That was splendid!"

"But some days it rained, and some days nobody bought a single thing, and we were afraid the cats would be hungry ever so many days in the Winter. But grandpa was always eating apples this Summer, and he said it was too far to the orchard to pick them; so he bought every single one from us."

"One night, when we hadn't sold a thing all day, grandma bought all our cookies for tea; and Aunt Annie *loves* candy," Ammy added.

"Once the wind blew our store down, and twice the Loughlin boys, and those other bad boys that live around the corner, they tore it all down," said Dick.

"But we built it up again," Sammy said cheerfully; "and mamma used to come out and buy molasses candy. Papa bought all our apples one day when there were a good many; and Jamie, when he came home with all those other gentlemen, when they went walking they used to stop to buy apples of us."

"They called us the—largest—speculators—on—'change," said Ammy, going over the long words, as if they were large stones, very carefully.

"Didn't you get tired of the store and keeping still so long?" I asked.

"Yes, sometimes, a good deal," answered Ammy for the three. "We didn't have many rides last Summer, and we couldn't play croquet much; we were so busy. Papa said he thought we might close the business when we had two dollars. But it took a long time to make it, and I don't believe we ever should have quite made it if Jamie and the young gentlemen hadn't come home. But we've got it now, and twenty cents over. Papa says it's a great deal more trouble for us to look after it than it is for him to take care of his. But *that* is his own, and *this* belongs to the cats. Don't you see?"

"And what do the cats have to say about it?" I asked.

"Oh, they can't *say* anything at all, Aunt Ellie; but they're very glad, I guess, because they all like to stay in our hospital. And oh! do you know? it's really and truly so, one day in the Spring, after the big black cat got well, and was going everywhere he pleased, what do you suppose he did? Why, he helped a kitten that had broken its paw to the hospital door, and stood there and mewed and mewed

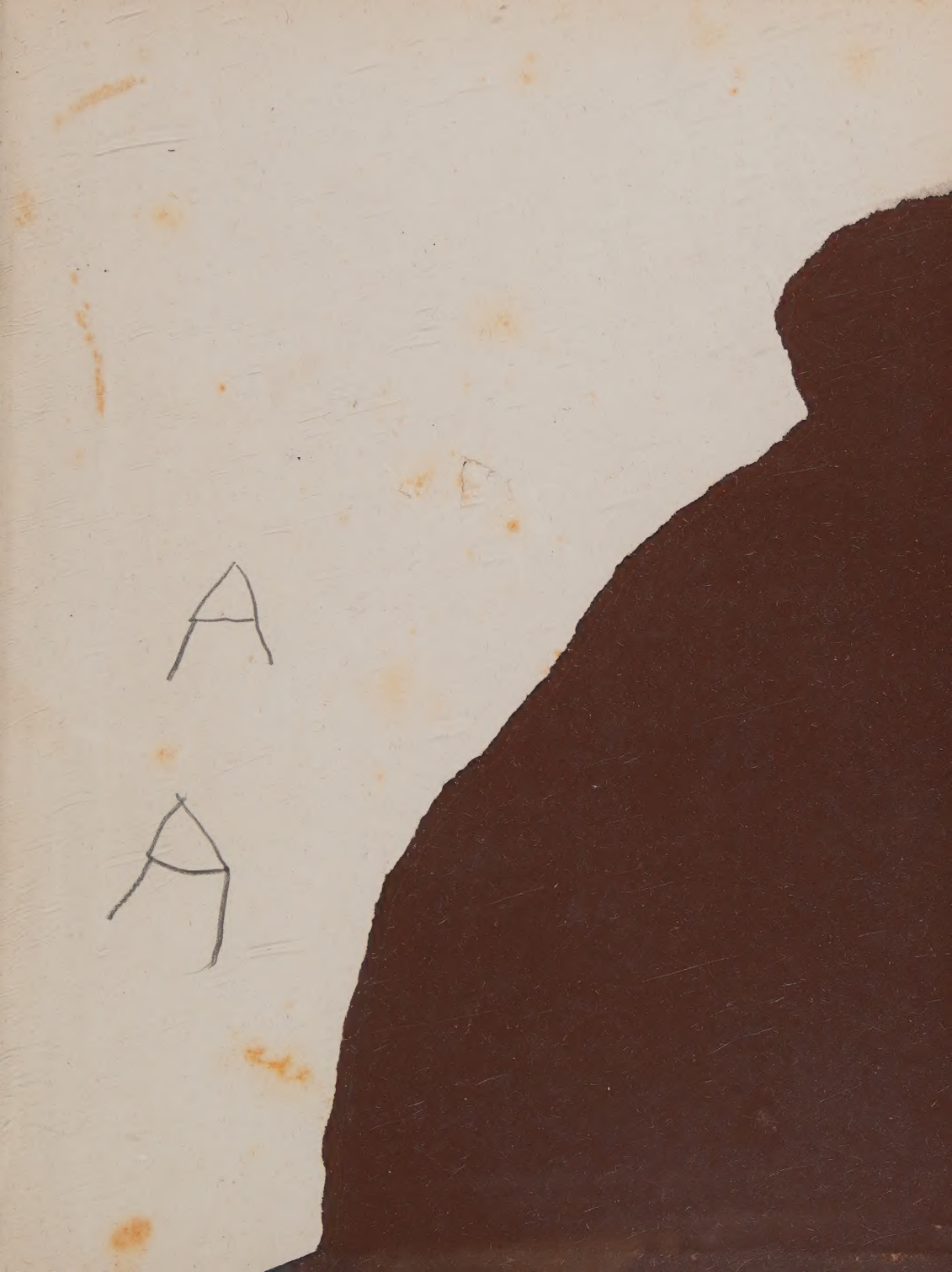
until we came out of the house to see what was the matter. Papa says he thinks he ought to be a gentleman pensioner for life, so we've made him one. He's always going to be taken care of; and don't he look beautiful with his medal on?"

"Beautiful," I agreed, when I looked at the fierce old gentleman cat, who used to wear a red flannel bandage around his head, and who was now sunning himself in the path near us, and holding himself very straight indeed, on account of the broad blue ribbon around his neck, from which something very bright and shining was hanging.

"It isn't really a medal," whispered Sammy. "It's only a new penny that Jamie bored a hole in; but he thinks it's just as nice, so we never tell him the difference."

And then, because it was time for me to go home, the three brown boys escorted me to the gate, and after nodding, smiling, and shouting "Good-by" till I was turning the corner, raced back to the house, carrying their precious bag carefully between them.

Blessed brown boys! so cheerful and so patient! They never told me, but some of the grown-up people did, how patiently, day after day, they trotted over the long dusty road to grandpa's! How they gave up all their rides! Even their goat carriage grew dusty and creaky, standing in the

stable; and the goats themselves grew fat and skippy beyond everything for want of driving! How unwearyingly they sat in the little hot store waiting for some one to come and add to their collection of pennies! How bravely, when the store was tumbled down by the wind and the bad boys from "round the corner," who have no sympathy at all for cats, they built it up again! How they endured knocks and thumps, and having all their cookies stolen and their candy tumbled into the dirt, by those same "round-the-corner boys" one afternoon, and were not discouraged! How tired the little feet must have been, and how the fat arms must have ached from carrying apples, before the two dollars was raised! And do you remember of whom it was said that not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowing it? and if He knows and counts and sees the sparrow, of course He must all other living creatures.

So don't you think, with me, that He must look with very tender, loving eyes on the three brown boys and their cats' hospital?